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Nepalis in Tibet

Dor Bahadur Bista**

To the countries adjacent to it, including Nepal to the south, Tibet has never been the closed and mysterious land it has characteristically been for more distant peoples, particularly Westerners. In fact, the entire social, cultural, and economic history of Tibet is inextricably bound up with that of its neighbors. Until the beginning of the nineteenth century, Nepal shared greater cultural affinity with, and had greater economic interest in, Tibet than India. There were more Nepalis in Tibet than anywhere else outside Nepal; and there were more people of Tibetan than of Indian origin in Nepal. Prior to the nineteenth century, stronger ethnic and linguistic connections existed between Nepal and Central Asia than between Nepal and South Asia.

When we speak of the presence of Nepalis in Tibet, we must do so with this historical background in mind. The first two sections of this paper, therefore, will attempt to set the historical stage for the concluding discussion on Nepalis in the Tibet Autonomous Region of the People's Republic of China today. I will try to redress the imbalance brought about by so many one-sided views of Tibet as portrayed in the Western press as well as among misinformed Nepalis themselves.

The Early Days

Before Europe knew or cared much about the Himalayan area, the inhabitants of the region travelled into each others' territories frequently and freely for a variety of purposes. The fact that most of the Himalayan region is traditionally populated by people who speak Tibeto-Burman languages and who have Mongoloid physical features is evident. For Nepalis, travel and interaction with the south was difficult and dangerous compared to travel towards the north, at least until the nineteenth century. The dense, subtropical forest to the south, with its diseases, wild animals, and all kinds of evil spirits, demons, monsters, dacoits and robbers was not considered by any means safe and secure. By contrast the journeys to the north,

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although certainly physically demanding, more pleasant and rewarding. Even the Indo-European-speaking non-Mongoloid Khas, who are most closely related to the Thakuris and Chetris of today than others and who live in the western Himalayas, travelled more to the north than to the south. The relative ignorance of the north Indian culture and religion among the Indo-European speaking non-Mongoloid Khas of the upper Karnali basin in western Nepal, even at the present time, reflects this situation.

The economic interdependence of these people with Tibet is very significant even today. The close cultural and economic contact of people from the Kathmandu Valley and areas around it with Tibet is, of course, well known. But even though not as well known, contacts of the people in the Himalayas along the northern border are not much less significant, nor could the safety valve that is provided by the southern slopes and valleys of the Himalayas for Tibetan populations from the very early days right down to the second half of the twentieth century be easily dismissed (cf. Furer-Hamendorf 1964, 1975).

The Vedic people from north India regarded the land beyond the Himalayas as holy, the land of the gods. The origin of the name Tibet itself is derived from the Vedic expression "Tribistapa" (heaven). People of Tibet or of Nepal for that matter do not use the English word "Tibet", but rather "Bod" in Tibetan, or "Bhot" in Nepali. But the ancient Hindus made many references to Tibet. The Mahabharata, for example, mentions Bhimsen's trip to Tibet for the purpose of borrowing gold to use during the battle of Kurukshetra. At the end, all the five Pandava brothers and Draupadi, their consort, travelled to the north on their final journey. It is an interesting cultural coincidence that the Pandava brothers had a polyandrous marriage with their common wife, Draupadi, a practice commonly followed in Tibet.

Even the father of historiography, Herodotus, mentions people from the Himalayas going to Tibet to steal gold. Writing obviously from hearsay, more than 2,400 years ago, Herodotus said that "a tribe dwelling northward of all the rest of the Indians...shorter in stature and size ... more warlike than any of the other tribes sends forth its men to steal" the gold ... /When they reach the fold/ ... "they fill their bags with sand and ride away at their best speed" (MacGregor 1970:259).

Because there is little recorded history about the relationship between Nepal and Tibet before the seventh century, it is rather difficult to state the exact nature of its contacts with surrounding regions. Scholars lament the situation when they make remarks like "another neighbouring country with which Tibet has been brought into closer contact than with India, is Nepal, and here again we find ourselves on equally barren ground" (Li 1960). David Snellgrove and.

Hugh Richardson considered that "The main influences continued to be China in the east and Nepal in Central Tibet ... Relations with Nepal were very ancient indeed, but it was not until about 1590 that there is any mention of a formal treaty between the two countries" (1968:201). They state further that "... it is fairly certain that there were already trading connections between Nepal and Tibet long before the Tibetans became a recognized political power ... once we enter an historical period, Nepal begins to become a kind of half-way house between Tibet and central India." (Ibid, 1968:26).

The all time renowned Professor Tucci has put in more succinct remarks:

"Because of her prolonged relations with Tibet, Nepal was destined to leave a lasting imprint on Tibetan art. The manuscripts, often illuminated, which the abbots of the great monasteries, particularly the Sakya-pas, had copied; and the welcome extended to Nepalese artists, who enjoyed great fame in Tibet, gave rise to the Nepalese style; and this long dominated the development of Tibetan painting, especially that of Ü and Tsang. Indeed, the renown of Nepalese artists was such that even the Mongol emperors asked for their work to embellish the temples and palaces they were building. One such artist (of whom the Chinese chronicles also tell us) was the seventeen year old Aniko who, with twenty-four colleagues, went to China on Phakpa's advice.

One gathers from biographies of the more famous founder abbots that Nepalese craftsmen were often brought into paint the newly-built walls in fresco; in some cases the actual names of the artists are recorded, as in the case of those who decorated the Lhakhang built by the founder of the Ngor sect, Kunga-Sangpo (1382-1444). (Tucci 1967:100)."

There is an interesting ancient cult of Bhimsen among the Newars of Nepal. Naturally, the mention of Bhimsen's name reminds us of the Mahabharata in the context of north India. But this Bhimsen of the Newars does not seem to have very much to do with the battle of Kurukshetra, the Kauravas, the remaining brothers among the Pandavas nor indeed anything else connected with the epic at least for the purpose we are considering here. Among other things, one interesting facet of this cult is that every twelve years a living "Bhimsen" from among the Pujaris of Bhimsen's shrine in Kathmandu travels to Lhasa, as the representative of the deity and collects some gold before his return. Formerly the Tibetan government had to give a certain amount of gold to him. The last Bhimsen visit took place in 1967-1968. The Lhasa Branch of the People's Bank of China allowed a certain amount of gold to be cashed at the official rate, thus maintaining the tradition at that time. I have not yet had an opportunity to discover additional details of this tradition. The origins of these cultural

connections are buried in prehistory and mythology. There are, however, records of contact from the second quarter of the seventh century onwards.

Discussing cultural contacts between Nepal and Tibet, Norbu and Turnbull write that Srontsan Gampo, the first historic King of Tibet, recognized the value of a political marriage and allied himself first with Nepal by marrying its princess. "The Princess Bhrikuti was a devout Buddhist who brought with her as part of her dowry several valuable Buddhist images" at the time of her marriage. The Tsulag Khang, "which stands today in the middle of the city of Lhasa that has grown up around it" was built to house the images. "Nepalese architects and builders and all the necessary craftsmen were sent from Nepal for the work on the temple, the first to be built in Tibet" (Norbu and Turnbull 1968:141). They go on to say that, "In his negotiations with the King of Nepal for the hand of Bhrikuti, Srontsan Gampo had stated quite plainly that he was not a Buddhist, and did not practice the ten virtues, but that if the King so desired he would adopt the ten virtues and would further the cause of Buddhism with all his might" (1968:141).

Norbu and Turnbull also mention that with the coming of Buddhism, Tibetan religious art and writing "took on a distinctive style derived from the art of schools of India and Nepal, though in eastern Tibet the style is markedly Chinese" (1968:330).

It is also believed that along with the religious and cultural contacts maintained throughout the period there were political and military alliances as well.

During the following century Tibet suffered a setback in its development of Buddhism. It was from Nepal that the famous monk Shanta Rakshit and, subsequently, Padma Sambhava, were invited into Tibet to reestablish the religious faith. There is, however, a great deal of confusion about the place of origin of Padma Sambhava and even about the historicity of his being. But that need not distract us from the main thesis of our discussion. Whether Padma Sambhava was a historic figure or just an embodiment of a movement, the fact remains that Nepal was the source of contact, and Nepali monks along with the traders, craftsmen, masons, builders, etc., were the chief agents working actively in the early years to build up the so-called Tibetan civilization. Stein makes a similar point when he says that the Tibetan king of the eighth century "brought the Buddhist monk Shantā Rakshitā from Nepal and was ordained a monk by him with the religious name of Yeshe Wang-Po. It was in Nepal again that he is said to have met the famous saint Padma Sambhava who became the patron of the non-reformed orders of Tibet" (Stein 1972:66).

Up until the thirteenth century when Aniko, the famous Nepali architect, travelled with his band of workers and assistants from Nepal to Lhasa and ultimately to Peking where he built temples and monuments of considerable renown, Nepalis maintained very good relations at the highest artistic levels in addition to the trade that had always been one of the most important channels of intercourse between the two peoples. It was, however, with the beginning of the religious reform movement of Je Tsong Khapa (1357-1419) and his Gelugpa (Yellow Hat sect) that religious and cultural relations with Nepal were gradually pushed to the periphery. Trade and commerce began to predominate the official relationship from then on. Traditional religious and cultural ties with a definite emphasis on spiritual values began to be overshadowed by material concerns reflected in trade and commerce, although cultural ties were not altogether neglected. One other quote from Tucci will have to tell us that: "the custom of patronizing well-known Nepalese artists never lapsed; the fifth Dalai Lama kept it up and his biography cites several names under the year 1659" (Tucci 1967:100).

The Colonial Shadows

As the British East India Company consolidated its hold on the South Asian subcontinent during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Nepal's behaviour toward her own neighbours also began naturally to be preoccupied with the maximization, or at least the preservation, of her own political and economic interests. This period represents, for Nepal, a decisive shift away from a concentration on religious and cultural matters because of the obvious threat presented by the British. Nepal's policy towards Tibet, therefore, was also affected.

The competition between Nepal and the British government to expand trade into Tibet during the eighteenth century can be clearly perceived in the reports of George Bogle, the first British officer ever to visit Tibet as the representative of the Governor General in Bengal, Warren Hastings (Markham 1971). Although Bogle reports that Nepal's misbehaviour had antagonized the Tibetan authorities, thus presenting the British with an opportunity to exert their influence in the area, one is led to conclude that in fact both Tibet and Nepal were still considered much closer to each other, and the Panchen Lama's polite behaviour towards Bogle was only a matter of courtesy. Bogle, for example, in one of his despatches to the Governor General after his audience in Shigatse with the Panchen Lama on January 19, 1775, reported that the King of Nepal had written to Tibetan authorities that he wanted to establish factories at locations

"... upon the borders of Tibet and Nepal, where the merchants of Tibet might purchase the commodities of his country and those common articles of commerce to be transported through his kingdom, but no glasses or other curiosities, and desired them to prohibit the

importation of them also; that he desired them further to have no connection with Fringies* or Moghuls, and not to admit them into the country, but to follow the ancient custom, which he was resolved likewise to do; that a Fringie had come to him upon some business, and was now in his country, but he intended to send him back as soon as possible, and desired them to do the same with us; that he had written also about circulating his coin, and had sent 2000 rupees for that purpose ... The Lama did not at this time desire my opinion upon the Gorkha Rajah's letter, and I made no remarks upon the subject (Markham 1971:158)."

Elsewhere he reports a letter which his host the Lama wrote to the King of Nepal, requesting him to "allow all merchants, as Hindus, Mussulmans, and the four castes, to go and come, and carry on their trade freely" (Markham 1971:198). Markham summarizes the situation as follows: "A flourishing trade was carried on between Tibet and the plains of India, through the passes of Nepal ... The Kashmiri merchants carried their goods by Ladak to Kuti, at the head of the pass, to procure wool; their manufactures went thence partly for use in Tibet, partly to China by Sining, and partly to Patna by the valley of Nepal. Tibetan merchants brought woollen cloths, ponies, shawl goats, yaks, sheep, musk, salt, borax, gold, silver, and paper to Kathmandu, and the lamas sent much bullion to the Nepal mints" (1971:liv).

This situation continued in spite of the sporadic efforts of the British, as was their policy at that time, to try to drive a wedge into any cleavage that might develop between Tibet and Nepal.

There were other European visitors to Tibet who knew about China and India but who were completely ignorant of even the existence of Nepal. One such visitor to Lhasa during the middle of the nineteenth century was Huc. He describes the presence of the Nepalese population, thinking all the time that they were Indians. "Among the foreigners who constitute part of the fixed population of Lhasa, the Pebouns** (pronounced as "Pebou") are the most numerous. They are Indians from Butan" (Huc 1852:251). He did not know that it is only to the Nepalis that the Tibetans refer as "Pebou." The Indians are called by the Tibetans as "Gya-kar", the Bhutanese, as "Drukpa"; the Sikkimese, as "Denjong"; the Mongols, as "Sök-Po."

Huc lets us know more about the Nepalese when he continues:

*British people were referred to as "Fringie", originally the term used by the Portuguese in India.

**Huc not being quite familiar with the Tibetan tones may have heard a slightly nazalized ending, hence the "n". I prefer to leave "n" out, the way it is pronounced in Tibet.

"The Pebouns are the only workers in metal in Tibet, and in their quarters must be sought the smiths, braziers, tinmen, plumbers, goldsmiths, as well as the physicians and chymists /-sic/ ... The Pebouns fabricate vases of gold and silver, and ornaments of all kind for the use of the Lama Convents. It is they also who furnish the beautiful gilt plates for the temple, which resist so well the inclemency of the seasons, preserving unimpaired their first freshness and brilliancy. The Pebouns are also the dyers of Lha-sa; their colours are durable as well as vivid; the stuffs wear out but never discolour (Huc 1852:251)."

Huc goes on to describe the nature of the people themselves: "These people are extremely jovial and childlike in temper, like children laughing and frolicking in their hours of relaxation, and singing continually over their work. Their religion is Indian Buddhism"; he does not know that there was not much Buddhism in India at the time, and he continues "but they show great respect nevertheless for the reform of Tsong Kaba, and never fail on days" of grand solemnity to prostrate themselves at the feet of the Buddha-La and offer their adorations to the Tale Lama" (Huc 1852: 251-252).

It is interesting that about three-quarters of a century later the British resident representative in Lhasa, Sir Charles Bell, who has also given one of the most impressive accounts of Tibet, thought that the Nepalese in Lhasa were not, as a rule, on good terms with the Tibetans. At the time he reported that there was a large colony of Nepalese in Lhasa and smaller colonies in Tse-tang, Shigatse, Gyantse, Lhatse, and at places in the province of Kongpol (Bell 1928: 118).

But Sir Charles Bell appears more charitable and understanding of Nepal's position when he says: "After the expedition of 1904 when the road was extended through the length of the Chumbi Valley to Phari and Gyantse ... Nepal's trade with Tibet has thereby suffered great injury, a fact which we should appreciate all the more when we remember the large measure of assistance which she gave us in the latter expedition: ... The 1904 expedition also opened up direct dealings between British and Tibetans, and this has reacted unfavourably on Nepal, which had at times played the part of an intermediary between the two, and had enjoyed the advantages with which such a position endowed her. Nepal in fact on that occasion helped us towards a result which has worked to her own detriment" (1928:233-234).

Although the noted British authorities were always very quick to see any misunderstanding or differences between the Nepalis and the Tibetans, they were also quick to see, as during the British expedition the leader himself saw, that "the concrete evidence that the Nepalese were on the British side would have a great effect on

the Tibetans" (MacGregor, 1970:312). One other interesting observation has been made by Amaury de Riencourt. "A thorn in Tibet's side" he says "was Nepal." He asserts that "Relations between both countries had never been good. Though there are many Buddhists in Nepal, the Gurkhas are mainly Hindus, very proud of their military traditions and contemptuous of pacifists -- Tibetans, Indians and Chinese alike. Incidents always occurred along their mutual border in spite of British efforts to settle their disputes and since the Maharaja of Nepal's refusal to help him during his exile in India, the Inmost One (Dalai Lama) had felt a deep hostility toward the Gurkhas. But Nepal, though unpleasant, was a small country; it could hardly threaten the roof of the world" (Reincourt 1950:180-181). Although these kinds of remarks display an ethnocentric attitude and an air of condescension there is a certain amount of truth in depicting the attitude of at least the courtiers and the rulers of Nepal for the particular period he talks about. One thing we do not know, and which is not often discussed, is how much Nepali behaviour, chrystalized during the past couple of centuries, was in fact a result of the entire colonial-imperial context in Asia; how much of it was the mimicry of the influential and prestigious powers.

It was obviously in the best interests of the British in India to see Nepal/Tibet relations remain less than cordial. And it made perfectly good sense to dig up all the differences that existed and nurture them. Therefore both the Tibetans and the Nepalis received all possible pressures from the British, who tried to achieve their goals at any cost, while China was too weak to do very much about it. Nevertheless, it was outrageous for the Nepal government to have assisted and escorted the British armed mission when finally it forced its way to Lhasa in 1904. It was extremely unfair to the Tibetans, particularly since a treaty existed between Nepal and Tibet at this time. According to this treaty Nepal would be expected to fight for the Tibetans whenever necessary. Article 2 of the 1856 treaty between Nepal and Tibet specifically mentioned that, "Tibet being the country of monasteries, hermits and celibates, devoted to religion, the Gurkha Government have agreed henceforth to afford help and protection to it as far as they can, if any foreign country attacks it" (Sir Charles Bell 1968:278-279).

It is certainly understandable that the Tibetans would ultimately lose all faith and trust in the Nepali government after this. Therefore all the gossip of Sir Charles Bell about the Tibetan officials being wary, distrustful, and suspicious of the Nepalis becomes a needless tautology at best. Nepalis had already slipped to an untrustworthy low in the eyes of the Tibetans. Nepal on the other hand did not care very much what the Tibetans thought about them any longer. For the glamor, the radiance, and more importantly the threat of the British Empire was too overwhelming. Hundreds of thousands of Nepali youths were serving either in the British Army or engaged in other economic activities in different parts of the empire. Nepal,

although politically independent, had become virtually an economic subordinate to the Empire by the turn of the century and certainly after World War I.

In time, the Nepali traders in Tibet were no longer trading much in Nepali goods. After the opening of the Sikkim route all the Nepali traders diverted their trade to the commerce between Bengal and Tibet. There was very little trade opportunity for Nepal. As the Nepali elites of the day began to seek education under the British system in India, which subsequently was extended to Kathmandu, the Nepal Government almost completely ignored Tibet, forgot the traditional ties, and neglected the commitments made earlier as the education system discouraged learning the history of one's own country and the true nature of its relations with the neighbouring countries. This was especially true when Nepal was governed by individuals who were concerned exclusively with their own personal interests almost to the total exclusion of any larger national interests.

Although political relations at these higher levels atrophied, the peoples of the two countries, nonetheless, continued their intercourse much as they always had. Thus, relations between Nepal and Tibet, which began deep in the hoary past, have continued to this day regardless of the ups and downs of political and state level relations.

A peculiar demographic fact of the situation is that all the Nepalis who went to Tibet were males, with no females whatsoever. Many men, therefore, took local Tibetan wives once they were there. Thus, the Nepalis from mixed marriages in Tibet were exclusively from Tibetan mothers and Nepali fathers. Subsequent generations, however, could have had both parents as born-in-Tibet Nepalis. Therefore, in the course of time a large number of people of either sex who claimed to be Nepali citizens spoke only Tibetan and had never in the lifetime even visited Nepal.

Newari-speaking people have always maintained a number of Guthis -- a kind of religious corporation or guild through which a strong group cohesiveness is maintained. They followed the same tradition in Lhasa. Since ritual and commensal purity used to be a preoccupation of those Nepalis who went to Tibet, they were very careful to form their own exclusive Guthi organizations there. There were about a dozen such operative Guthis among the Nepalis of Lhasa alone. Each one of them had its own patron deities, lots of ornaments, jewelry, ritual texts, pots and pans and dishes for holding big feasts, etc. Interestingly enough they did not allow their own children from Tibetan wives to join any of these Guthis. Therefore the Nepalis born in Tibet formed their own Guthis, following the tradition of their fathers. This made for a strict economic and social division based primarily on the legitimacy of ritual status.

The Tibetan-born Nepalis remained either small peasant farmers, cattle or sheep breeders, or wage earners, while the Nepal-born Nepalis invariably remained traders and shopkeepers. Not all of them were rich or successful, but this system certainly excluded any Tibetan-born Nepali from being a successful trader. The traditional law of inheritance among the Nepalis did not allow any of them to inherit much of the property left behind by the Nepal-born merchants. The property went to the legitimate collateral descendants living in Nepal rather than to the direct descendants of the deceased living together in a family in Tibet.

This was the main reason why many of these people with mixed parentage chose to accept Chinese citizenship rather than Nepalese when they were given the choice for the first time in 1960-1962. But since then the Chinese officials have given equal opportunities for trade transactions of both types of Nepalis, regardless of whether they were born in Nepal of Nepali mothers or born in Tibet of Tibetan mothers.

In the meantime, Nepal's law of inheritance also has changed to give equal rights for parental property children born of the same fathers regardless of the mother's ritual status. This has made a big difference in the contemporary composition of the Nepali population in Tibet. One basic difference, of course, is in the number of Nepalis born in Tibet. This population has decreased from hundreds to a few dozen and only a few of them are successful traders. But this aspect will be discussed further in the next section.

The Recent Situation

In 1974, the Nepali population in Lhasa proper was about 350, with about fifteen in the suburban villages, seventy in Shigatse, only one in Gyantze, and seventy-five in Yatung. Of these, about twenty were from the Kathmandu Valley, living temporarily in Lhasa, and the same number were born in different parts of Nepal outside of Kathmandu. The others were born in Tibet either of mixed parentage or mixed ancestry of a few generations maintaining Nepali lineage. The total number of Nepalis residing in Tibet at the time Sir Charles Bell visited Lhasa in 1920 was 600-700 Newars and over 1,000 persons of mixed parentage (Bell 1924:233).

According to an agreement between the two governments, people with mixed origin were given a choice of citizenship in 1962. Those who opted for Nepali citizenship were given Nepali passports; many others opted for Chinese citizenship. Thus, the people were formally and clearly aligned on two sides for the first time in history.

A majority of Tibetan-born Nepalis of mixed origin in 1974 were wage earners; a few were farmers; one or two, livestock herdsman; about thirty-five ran small retail shops; fourteen of them owned and drove horsecarts; and about a dozen carried on international trade between the two countries under government license.

The majority of them were illiterate, and the remainder were barely literate with very little understanding of modern government, the international situation, and of international trade. At the time, in Lhasa there was only one Nepali trader who was educated to some degree and was, therefore, aware of the world outside and had some knowledge of international trade. He was trusted by the authorities in both Lhasa and Kathmandu because he was one of the few individuals who could be trusted at all levels of behaviour. There was one other reputable firm which was still doing some trade although much less than in the past. These few traders were doing relatively well although not all of them had had much education. There were a few individuals of mixed parentage who had apparently opted for Chinese citizenship in 1962 but for some reason had changed their minds afterwards and decided to apply for Nepali citizenship. One difficult case to decide was still pending as of 1974.

Remnants of Nepali institutions remain but are dwindling. There is a primary school for Nepali children at Lhasa with an enrollment fluctuating between forty and eighty. Nepali textbooks are brought from Kathmandu and the teachers are appointed by the Royal Nepali Consulate. The Thakāli (elder) system of the older days was nonfunctional by this time. He did not have to interpret for or represent the Nepalis since each of them could approach the office personally whenever necessary and not through the Thakāli as had been the practice in the past. Because the majority of Nepalis in Tibet were born in Tibet, most of them do not speak Nepali and have not even been to Nepal.

As described above, Nepalis in Lhasa had, through the centuries of their residence there, developed the Guthi system of worship, feasts, and picnics, as had been their style at home in Nepal. But by 1974 all the Guthis had become defunct. The only practice still prevalent was that of "Saraswati Puja" on the fifth day of the bright fortnight of the lunar month of Phalgun (during the latter part of January). A shrine, known as "Kamakusha" (or Saraswati) is maintained by the Nepalis on the eastern outskirts of Lhasa, which is more or less neglected throughout the year. It is cleaned up and maintained once a year just for the purpose of that particular day when the Nepalis visit the shrine, picnic, and rejoice for the day.

In order to give a fuller understanding of present-day Nepali populations in Lhasa, I will present a few case studies here. These were all recorded during 1974.

Case Study One

A few miles west of Lhasa proper and over the hill lives a family consisting of a husband, wife, and two children, all of whom carry Nepali passports. They often come to the Nepali Consulate and request assistance in settling in Lhasa proper. They know that if they come without the prior approval of the authorities, they will not receive their ration card, and everyone knows that it is pretty expensive to live there without a ration card. The head of the family says that he is a drokpa /nomad/ and that he has no land. His entire family is forced to make a living from sixteen yaks and five sheep. He pleads that the number of his livestock is not adequate and therefore living is very hard for him and his family although he has a permanent house to live in. This man and his wife look quite healthy and well fed. They are dressed in warm, heavy woolen clothes in the traditional Tibetan style. Therefore, it is difficult to believe everything he says; one has learned from experience that the method of argument used here is to apply pressure and to insist rather than reason logically. When told that Lhasa will not provide them with a more comfortable living than they have in the pasture area, the man insists that they will make a living by working on building sites as laborers. There are quite a few building projects in Lhasa that employ Nepalis of mixed parentage. Is this a better way to make a living than being a herdsman in a suburb of Lhasa? The man is not sure so he changes the subject. He, with his wife and children, would like to return to Nepal. Upon inquiry he admits that he has never been anywhere outside Tibet. He has no relatives or acquaintances in Nepal and has no savings to establish himself there initially. Neither he nor any of his family speak a word of Nepali. They do not know who their ancestors were. Finally, he agrees that his return to Nepal would be even harder for him. He takes leave with a grin.

The next time, he shows up at the consulate is six months after his first visit, and he repeats the same requests. He is advised to try at the Lhasa Foreign Bureau for permission to move to Lhasa. He agrees and leaves. After a few months he returns to the consulate and reports that he has surrendered his yaks and sheep to the collective. So presently, he has no other problem except that he owes some money to some of his relatives. He wants to borrow 100 yuan from the consulate. All things considered, it does not look as though he will be able to or be inclined to repay the money. So he is given sixty yuan out of the Social Welfare Fund for Nepalis as an outright gift and he is happy when he leaves.

Case Study Two

There are a few Nepali families living in a village about a day's journey north of Lhasa proper. One healthy and decent looking young man in modern Chinese work clothes turned up at the consulate

one morning. He complained that his cow had been forcibly taken by another man in the village and he had no redress. When asked to clarify his story further, he related a tale of how he had tethered his cow on a peg by the side of his house; how the honking and roaring noise of an automobile on the road passing the village had frightened the cow; how the cow had broken the lead and run away; how it had reached the green field of his neighbour; how he had approached the neighbour with apologies and with promises to compensate him for the loss of his green crops in the field; how his neighbour had turned a deaf ear to all of his petitions in spite of his willingness to compensate his loss.

This could not be the entire story. There must be other incidents in the village which led to misunderstandings with the petitioner, I thought. And after further enquiries he divulged the other part of the story. His village had been turned into a commune and all the land had been converted into communal land except his own. He owned thirteen separate pieces of land where he worked with his family independently. The village authorities had tried to convince him to accommodate himself and his property to the commune. He did not want to do this since it was not obligatory for him as Nepali citizen to do so. He also said that he had a few Chinese citizens living in a joint household with him who were entitled to a share of the common property. They were his mother, sister, and a couple of in-laws. This made things awkward. As a result, the members of the household were not allowed to use the water from the communal canal to irrigate their land. So he had not been able to sow his field. He argued: how could he produce crops which he had to pay as tax? He was advised to seek an accommodation with other members of the village and report to the authorities if there were any real injustices. Subsequently, he went to the "Chike Lekun", the foreign office under the Lhasa Municipality, that dealt with all the Nepalis except the consulate staff, and received a peice of paper ordering the release of his cow. He came to report this to the consulate but still asserted that he would rather return to Nepal. It was explained to him that Nepal is not a safe haven for irregular behaviour. There are laws to abide by in any country. So he might reconsider the whole thing and make up his mind. The consulate would help him whenever needed. He came on several occasions thereafter but with different problems to discuss. Many of these types of problems came from the mixed families, where half the members were Nepali citizens and the other half Tibetan Chinese.

Cast Study Three

One afternoon a group of five men called on me and introduced themselves as horsecart drivers. All except one had married Chinese-Tibetan women. The fifth had a Nepali-Tibetan wife. They

said they did not come to the consulate frequently during the past couple of years. The reason they gave was that "only the rich and selfish among the Lhasa Nepalis had influence there." People like themselves who had neither wealth nor influence were treated with contempt and indifference. But the situation had changed, as they realized, and they were encouraged to come and state their problems. Their problem was some sort of insurance against cart accidents, guarantee of their possessions, and the future security of their children. I promised to represent their case to the local authorities in Lhasa.

After this they dropped into the consulate more frequently. Their leader, who spoke fluent Nepali and made a regular habit of casually calling, gradually began to talk more about himself.

His father was a Jyapu /farmer7 from Kathmandu, and his mother a Tibetan; both of them were dead. His wife is a Khamba who had begged her way from Kham to Lhasa. He was a very poor man living on daily wages all the time in old Tibet. Since 1959 his condition had improved considerably. Now he owned two carts and four ponies, all of which were worth 10,000 yuan or about \$ 5,000. He made a good living with his horsecarts and had savings as well. He was financing the education of his oldest son who was fifteen in one of the best known boarding schools in Kathmandu. He had a private chapel in his Lhasa house where he had a number of idols as well as thankas and burned lamps every day and offered water in silver bowls. The Lhasa authorities visited his house frequently and did not object to his religious practices.

At a later date, he reported that he surrendered some of his gold and musk, which he had illegally procured some time ago as so many other people did, to the local authorities. He was then paid an official price, and he was advised to tell other Nepalis of this transaction and not to repeat this type of activity again.

Until recently, he was allowed by the Lhasa authorities to remit twenty pounds sterling every month like so many other Nepalis who were making an honest living. Incidentally, the problem actually was not one of the remittance but of convertible currency; Nepal and China do not have an official and fixed exchange rate. He said that this was then misused by smugglers and blackmarketeers to convert black money by bribing simple people to sell their money orders. When this was made known to the authorities the privilege was withdrawn. So he still had the problem of remittance. Subsequently this privilege was resumed for those Nepalis who were making money on trade, business, and other straight earnings.

At one time when asked what his Tibetan neighbours thought about the Nepalis in town, he answered, "As far as I know, in our block,

we have a very natural and normal relationship." And he added, "We work together and help each other at times when occasion arises. We Nepalis are not discriminated against. The Tibetan authorities of the block offer us help willingly whenever we need it." He added after a few seconds, "The higher authorities always seem to make sure that the Nepalis get jobs, and are treated fairly and reasonably at all times." After a few more seconds he concluded, "This was not quite the case for the past couple of years, we are having a much better time now."

Case Study Four

There was a man in his late fifties, a very old Nepali hand, who hung around the consulate for a few days when I first arrived in Lhasa. He was a Shrestha and came from Patan in Nepal. Every time he came in he began talking and continued automatically as long as he stayed. He was never coherent or sensitive to any reactions. He talked of Buddhas, future Buddhas, and of musk for a few minutes. Then he would give the amount of the bribes he had given to some former officials of the consulate. Next he would get excited and act out how he had boldly argued with the authorities in Lhasa. Then he would say he had been treated very well by the Chinese. Then he would switch topics to the state of religion, idols, thankas, silver bullion, and his wife back home in Nepal. He said there were some dishonest people in the consulate who bothered him. He did not mind bribing honest people, but he could not stand the dishonest. He was known to be the richest Nepali in Lhasa in terms of ownership of movable property. Therefore he did not mind distributing some of it because he expected it back in the next life. He suggested that he could consider any of the needs of the consulate official very favourably. The only problem he had was of his Tibetan-born Nepali wife in Lhasa. She spied on him all the time and reported everything, including his love affair with another woman. He wanted to marry the latter but the authorities did not endorse her Nepali citizenship. He expected the consul general to have courage and dignity as a representative of Nepal, the land of gods, and assist his mistress in getting Nepali citizenship, for she after all did have a Nepali as a distant ancestor. All the former officials who had represented him had profited from him. So there was no reason why the present ones should not. Besides God had predetermined everything, and had done everything. None of us should feel proud of our actions. To be sure, when he said "God", he meant "Buddha" and no one else. All the Hindu gods were the servants of Buddha. Before he got up to leave the room he said, "By the way, the thing I hate most is the visitors' book at the gate where I have to write my name and the purpose and time of my visit at the entrance. Never before in the history of Lhasa has there been a Nepali consulate where you have had to report at the gate in such an insulting manner."

At the end of one such session I told him that he need not take the trouble to come to the consulate anymore because I did not think I could do much to help him. He was enraged, he trembled and warned me in strong language, "Watch out! I have many strings that I can pull in Kathmandu including the ones in your own Foreign Ministry."

He remained a frequent visitor off and on and I learned not to take him seriously. He died of heart failure after about two years, leaving all his property and problems behind. Subsequently, his property was divided between his two surviving wives, one from Patan and the other from Tibet, with the help of the Nepali Consulate and the Lhasa authorities.

Cast Study Five

Once I chanced to ask a Nepal-born Nepali trader what he thought about the attitude of the Tibetans towards Nepalis in general. I was just curious whether lay Tibetans had any feelings different from those of the authorities. According to his observations, the younger people did not have much opinion one way or another. They did not care much. But the older ones, he remarked, say "Ning Che." "What does that mean?" I asked, "Oh", he said, "that means that they are sorry for us. One old man said to me the other day 'Ning Che Buddha!' /poor Buddha!/. "Why was that?" I was still curious. "My full name is Buddhā Ratna Sakya, but they just call me 'Buddha'." "I see. But why were you pitied by your old Tibetan friend?" "You probably don't know much of old Tibet," he began with a long breath, and as an after thought he added: "As a matter of fact I do not know much either myself, since I came here for the first time in 1965." Then he went on to explain that in the old days most of the Nepalis who came to Lhasa made lots of money easily and quickly. They were then addressed with the respectful term "Sota La" by everybody. The Nepalis became bankers, jewelers, traders, order suppliers, and -- no less significant -- also became attractive to Tibetan girls. But everything had changed since different commodities now were supplied by the state itself. There are large department stores where all consumer goods are available at very fair and reasonable prices. There is a modern bank to take care of the financial transactions and also there are stricter laws of marriage. There are no rich Tibetan women to wear expensive jewelry. "So" he continued, "You can see that it is just not possible to get rich quick as in the old days. And this change has been clearly observed by the older people, although the young are not aware of much of the past."

The fact that only the urban based skilled craftsmen and experienced people in business and various types of trade went to Tibet to make a living made all the difference in the general image of Nepalis in Tibet as opposed to those in Bihar, West Bengal, and

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Uttar Pradesh in India, where mostly unskilled wage earners from rural Nepal went to work as cheap labour.

The picture at present is changing very rapidly of course in both directions. Both skilled and unskilled labour is being attracted to Nepal from across the southern border. The migration pattern across the northern border is also very different now. There is only a trickle of movement on both sides of the Himalayan border.

There are only about a dozen Nepal-born Nepalis in Lhasa at present. The number of Tibetan-born Nepalis is considerably higher of course. And a great majority of them are wage earning urban labourers.

Case Study Six

There was another trader from Kathmandu who had never been in trouble since he had arrived in Lhasa. He had gone to Lhasa in 1945 as an employee of one of the biggest Nepali trading firms in Lhasa. He journeyed back and forth between Calcutta and Lhasa for a few years and finally settled down to his own business in 1960. He did not have much capital to begin with. He had started with the humble background of a small business in Kathmandu. He had some education and some experience with trade. Yet he had only this experience and honest effort in his favour. The authorities in Lhasa supported him and gave him opportunities to buy and sell with large profit margins. He said he did not quite understand the system in the beginning. So he hesitated and apologized for his inability to invest large sums of money as he did not have it. But this was no limitation, as the Lhasa authorities insisted he should just shoulder the weight and go along with them. The capital was no problem. He could make his payments only after he had finished the deal and made some profit. He did this with a great deal of uneasiness and misgiving. Less than fifteen years later he now deals with millions. He is grateful to everyone. He dropped in frequently at the consulate and discussed his business. He often said that the Nepali traders in Lhasa should have no problems. "Chinese officials have always been very generous and reasonable with us. As far as I am concerned, they have pulled me up and have lifted me from the street into my present status," he declared.

He is respected by most Nepalis in town, though a few from Kathmandu, who failed to get rich quickly, are jealous of him and do not mind talking against him. There are no more than six firms including his, which may continue to export and import. These traders are among the few who are sincerely grateful to the Lhasa authorities, our consulate, and to His Majesty's Government policies

on certain issues.

At one stage, I sought his advice on how to handle some Nepali citizens' claims for property and money they had lent some Tibetans. These Nepalis had approached the consulate and the foreign ministry for help. To this he said that no Nepali had ever gone to Tibet with a bagful of money. Invariably, they went there with empty bags and returned with full ones. Some had smaller bags and others bigger, but full they always were. During the process many Nepalis have either borrowed from or owed money to Tibetans. So if any claims of such properties are made, officially, the number of Nepalis having to return either property or money will be greater than the number of them receiving it. Thus, he concluded, it is more profitable for you not to take any action. It was decided to follow his advice.

Conclusion

It is hoped that these case studies give some representative picture of the Nepali population in the Tibet Autonomous Region of the People's Republic of China. What happens to them in the future depends entirely upon how realistic both sides can be in dealing with them.

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Gateway-Hinter Relations in Changing Nepal

Donald A. Messerschmidt*

Introduction

Social and economic development in Nepal involves a complex web of technological and social change, particularly in the areas of transport and communications. New ideas, technology, goods and services have traditionally flowed outward to the rural hinterlands from such central places as Kathmandu and Pokhara in the hills and northward from such lowland Terai entrepôts as Biratnagar, Narayanghat, Bhairahawa and Nepalgunj. With the recent opening of motorable roads in rural west-central Nepal, significant changes have occurred in the process of communication, in the dispersion of ideas and new technology, and in the transport routes by which these aspects of modernization penetrate the rural hinterlands. One result of these changes has been the growth of new towns and the decline or change of others. Some impacts from these changes have been reported in recent socioeconomic studies of new roads in Nepal, such as Blaikie et al. (1976a), Sharma (1976), Goil (1971), Schroeder and Sisler (1971), and S.B. Gurung (1977).

* Donald A. Messerschmidt teaches Anthropology at Washington State University in Pullman, Washington. This study was based on data gathered from two research trips along the Marsyangdi River trade route in 1971-1972 and 1980, from intimate knowledge of this region dating to 1963-1965 (when the author was a Peace Corps Volunteer in Lamjung District), and from an exhaustive search of the literature which deals with this region. The relationship between gateway communities and their hinterlands exemplified here is not unlike that found elsewhere in rural Nepal. The author is indebted to Ludwig Stiller, N.S. Peabody, J. Bodley, and T. Kohler for their critical reading of earlier versions and for their welcome advice for improvement of the paper. Clive Wing and his staff at the APROSC research library in Kathmandu are also thanked for their considerable assistance. Finally, the major research for this study, in 1980, was supported or assisted in various ways by the National Geographic Society (Grant No. 2139-90), the Washington State University and the University of Washington in the United States, and the Veit Burger Wohnung in Nepal.

In this paper, I continue the current interest in the study of roads, new towns and socio-economic changes in a discussion of a conceptual type of entrepot community called a "gateway" and its relationship to a rural hinterland. The hinterland on which I focus attention is the Marsyangdi River Valley, which channels trade through the hill districts of Lamjung and Manang and parts of Gorkha and Tanahu (see Map 1). The primary gateway community for this hinterland has changed several times in recent years, and is presently located at Dumre bazaar on the Kathmandu-Pokhara highway (Prithvi Rajmarg). Historic and contemporary factors and the probable future of gateways to the Marsyangdi hinterland are the primary subjects of this paper; other adjacent regions and gateways are not included.

The history and impact of change in the Marsyangdi hinterland is discussed in terms of the gateway concept. This paper thus serves as a 'think piece' and introduction to the topic of gateway-hinterland relations, a concept which is useful in elucidating certain types of change in Nepal. The paper shows only the potential utility of approaching change and modernization through the use of a gateway model. No attempt is made here to document or identify the detailed socio-economics of the gateway-hinterland exchange.¹

The paper begins with a definition and general discussion of the gateway concept. Following that, I review the history of trade relations and the growth, change and decline of gateways and nodes (key towns beyond the gateway) in the Marsyangdi hinterland. That history necessarily reviews the significance of the Newar business community of Bandipur in Tanahu district at the southern end of the hinterland region. I dwell particularly on the development of Bandipur in the 19th and 20th centuries, its local and regional importance, and its decline (with the rise of Dumre) during the construction of the Prithvi Rajmarg in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The paper concludes with a discussion and observations about the utility of the gateway model for studying change in rural Nepal, and with predictions about probable future changes in the gateway-hinterland relations of the Marsyangdi River region.

Gateway Communities

The term "gateway" denotes a positional characteristic and conjures up the image of an entrance to some area or region and, contrastingly, an exit to some other. To paraphrase Burghardt (1971: 269-270), such an entrance is typically limiting or narrow. It is used by those who wish to enter the hinterland beyond the "gate" or leave the "tributary area" behind it. The gateway community is, therefore, strategically situated to command the connections between the two regions it serves, both the inside (hinterland) and the outside (national core), two distinct worlds whose boundary it straddles. Such communities often develop as transport

centres "in the contact zones between areas of differing intensities or types of production, along or near economic shear lines" (Burghardt 1971:270). Or, as Hirth has succinctly put it (1978: 37):

Gateway communities develop either as a response to increased trade or to the settling of sparsely populated frontier areas. They generally are located along natural corridors of craft productivity; dense population; high demand or supply for scarce resources; and, at the interface of different technologies or levels of socio-political complexity. They often occur along economic shear lines where cost factors change and where there are economic discontinuities in the free movement of merchandise. The function of these settlements is to satisfy demand for commodities through trade and the location of these communities reduces transportation costs involved in their movement.

Gateways or entrepot communities contrast markedly with more centrally located service and transport communities known in the literature as "central places" (Losch 1954, Christaller 1966, Skinner 1967). Whereas the gateway exists at the edge of a region, the central place is located somewhere near its middle. Central places tend to exist within a relatively homogeneous productive region and are characterized principally by local trade connections (Burghardt 1971: 270; Christaller 1966). Gateways, in contrast, are linked to more heterogeneous populations and productive regions by more long distance trade routes.² Pokhara and Kathmandu are typical central places.³ In contrast, economic and social relations with a gateway community exist as a fan or funnel shaped set of interactions. Those of a central place are more nearly circular in shape. "The central place possesses a compact (circular, hexagonal, or square) service area, whereas the gateway has an elongated, fan-shaped service area which usually extends outward in a direction away from the national core area..." in the shape of "a funnel or a spout" (Burghardt 1971:270). Thus gateways exist at one side of their hinterland and transport links radiate outward, usually in one direction, linking individual communities along the standard line(s) of communication in a series of linear or dendritic market networks. According to Hirth, dendritic networks are

characteristic of many primitive economic systems... frequently found in areas where the population is dispersed, transportation is difficult or underdeveloped, and where there is a strong external economic orientation. In these systems, individual centers are linked directly to a gateway by exchange relationships. Dendritic networks may transcend political boundaries;

the centers within them may be completely autonomous and may interact very little with other centers in the hinterland. [1978:37]

Sometimes multiple gateways occur as one progresses into the hinterland, a common situation in the hinterlands of Nepal. And, as transportation links expand -- for example, when roads are built into a hinterland beyond its already established primary gateway -- secondary (interior) gateways may expand into new primary gateway communities in a progressive evolution of the type. Examples of multiple and evolving gateways are discussed below. See Figure 1 for a schematic representation of the dendritic relationship, and see Figure 2 for a comparison of gateway and central place communities.

The fundamental feature of gateway communities is their strategic location at the entrance to extended hinterlands. Thus, gateways tend to be located at sites of considerable transportation significance. In Nepal, they are typically found at the conjunction of major foot trails and motor roads, and commonly occur where bridges funnel traffic to a single common point. Roadhead communities such as Dumre bazaar and neighbouring Bimalnagar, both in Tanahu district, and similar towns such as Damauli and Mugling on the Prithvi Rajmarg west and east of Dumre, respectively, are examples of gateway towns (see Map 1).

It is in such gateway communities that one observes the breaking of bulk shipments which arrive by truck from India and the Terai via Pokhara (on the Siddhartha Rajmarg), and from Kathmandu. It is such gateway communities which serve as the primary nodes in an intricate network of interior transport routes serviced by human porters and/or, in a few instances, by pack animals.⁴

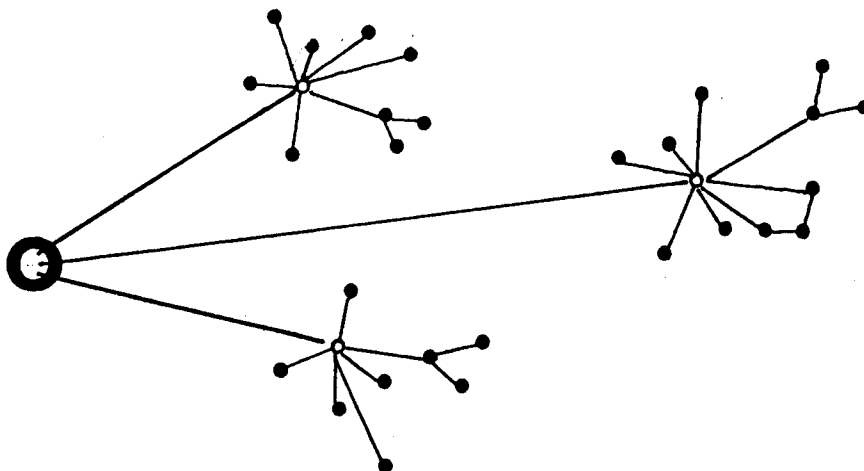


Fig. 1: The Dendritic Market Network (Hirsch 1978:38)

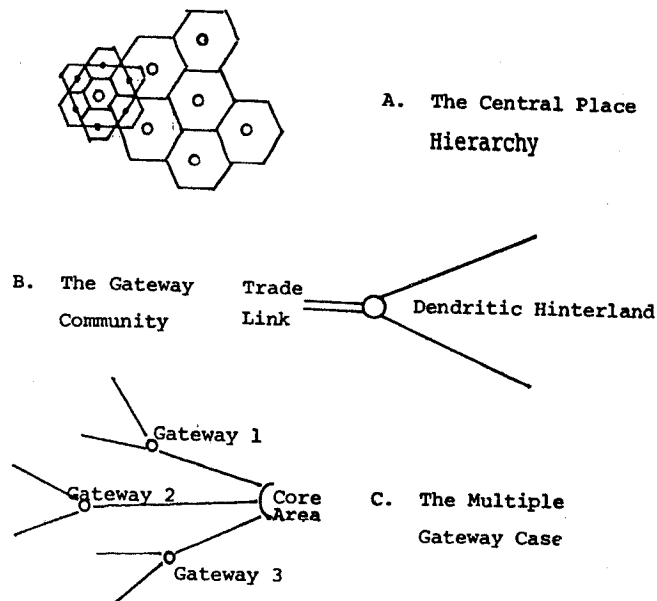
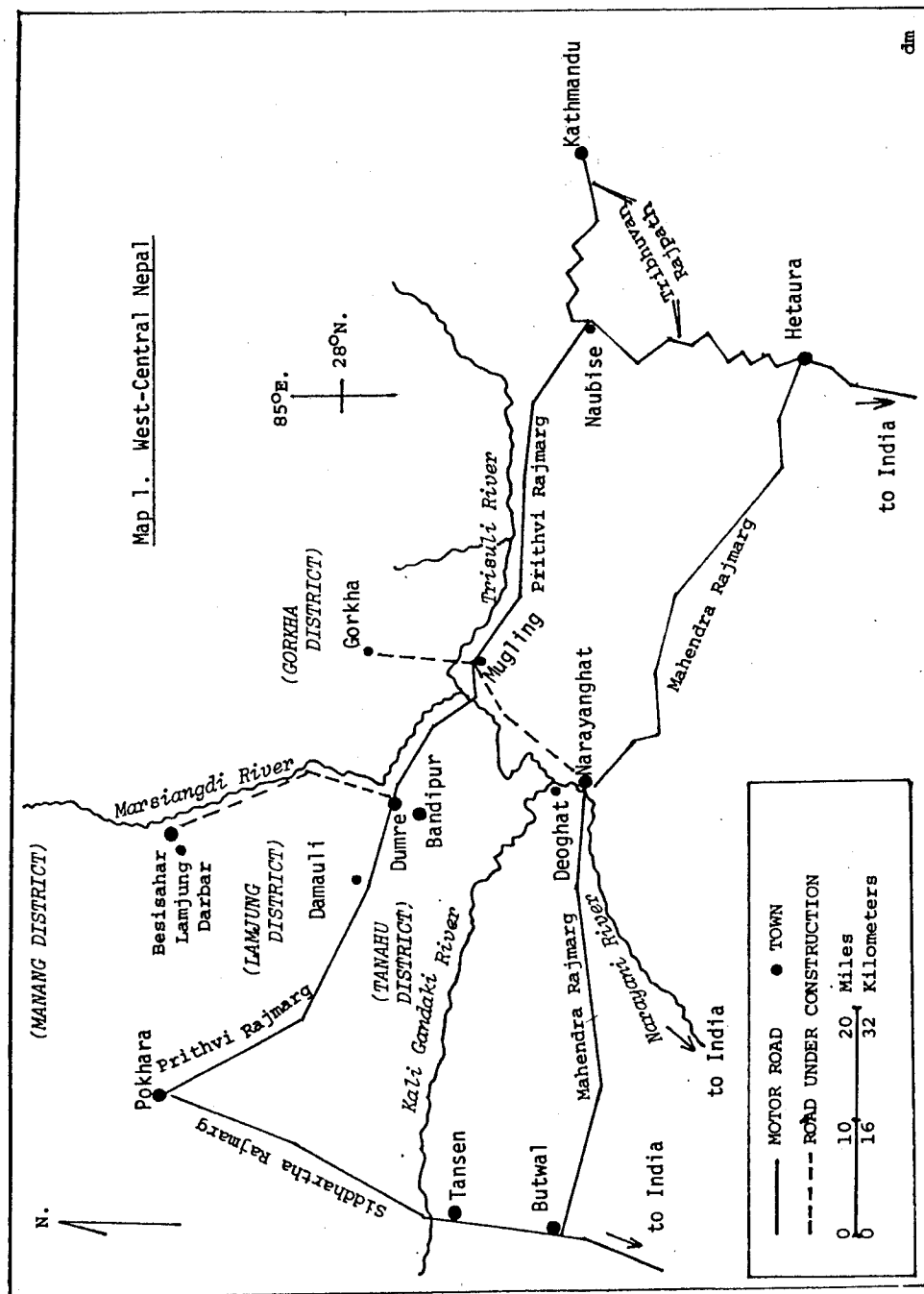


Fig. 2: A Comparison of Central Place and Gateway Community Hierarchies (Hirth 1978:39)

The Evolution of Trade in the Marsyangdi Hinterland

Earliest developments: 18th century. The history of trade through the Marsyangdi River Valley during the mid-18th century was first described by Hamilton (1819). The region was dominated by several of the Chaubisi Raj (twenty-four kingdoms) and the north-south Lamjung trade route had particular economic and strategic military importance in the rise of two of those kingdoms at Lamjung and Gorkha (Stiller 1973). This trade route led north across the Terai and inner Terai region from India to the gateway settlement of Deoghat at the confluence of the Trisuli and Kali-Gandaki rivers. The porter route from Dheghat is then described as ascending northward up through the foothills to Simjung, past Lamjung along the Marsyangdi River, and on to the Tibetan border by way of Larke Pass. The principal goods of this early exchange were salt from highland Tibet, grain from the lowlands and probably cotton from India (see Stiller 1976:120).



During this premodern period, the trade route had no important bazaars or centers of trade as we know them today. Rather, the nodes or centers of trade at the time are best characterized as loosely confederated, isolated principalities. These tiny princely states were linked together and ultimately linked to the Gangetic Plain at the south and to Tibet at the north by thin lines of transport and communication in the form of simple foot paths. The Lamjung trade route along the Marsyangdi River was dominated during the 18th century by one particularly strong kingdom, at Lamjung Darbar, whose fortress may still be seen on a ridge one mile west of the contemporary district headquarters town of Besisahar (see Map 1).

This trade route also passed by several strategic military outposts of the rival kingdom of Gorkha and at various times in the formative stage of development of the House of Gorkha, seige and counterseige were staged for control over it and the region it served. Full Gorkhali control of Lamjung was gained only in the 1780s, almost two decades after the House of Gorkha had established its central power in the Valley of Kathmandu and had launched a conquest encompassing the greater Himalayan region (Stiller 1973).

The importance of trade routes like that through Lamjung rose as the Gorkha Conquest progressed into the 19th century. Military garrisons were established to keep the expanding Nepalese (Gorkha) kingdom together, and support facilities in the form of far-flung trade centers, or bazaars, were developed (Stiller 1973, 1976). However, these did not reflect any indigenous urbanizing tendencies on the part of the rural peasantry whatsoever (Caplan 1975:3; Blaikie et al. 1976a:7.1). Rather, they were the direct spinoff of the need among the Gorkha rulers to man and support their isolated garrison towns.

The establishment of trade centers in support of military and administrative developments in the hinterlands marked the first of several historically well documented steps in the growth of central towns in rural Nepal. Internal trade and the development of rural bazaars grew parallel to the central government's tightening grip on the countryside. The establishment of bazaars was dominated throughout Nepal by Newar merchants from Kathmandu Valley.

Blaikie et al. (1976a:7.1ff.) describe the expansion of Newar trading and small manufacturing centers in west-central Nepal following solidification of Gorkha power, particularly in the latter half of the 18th century and the early 19th century. Based on accounts of an English traveller (Oldfield 1880), they point to the formal development of the hulak postal system, a "system of locally organized portage and the establishment of a series of staging posts manned by locals and operating under the supervision of administrative offices situated at strategic points along the trails"

(Blaikie et al. 1976a:7.1; see also Stiller 1976:34-38, and Regmi 1971:104-105 for fuller descriptions of the hulak system). Hulak offices were established at such west-central communities as Nayakot, Gorkha, Tanahu, Lamjung and Pokhara. "Many of the 'urban' centres now developing were thus not only administrative centres and strategic garrisons but also staging posts along the trails and crucial nodes in the transport network whose major function was to move arms and munitions efficiently and as swiftly as possible in the difficult hill country to where they were needed" (Blaikie et al. 1976a:7.2).

Meanwhile, trade with India was increasing and gateway communities in the Terai expanded and developed to serve the needs of the middle hills at their north. Growth was spurred in the interior by the continued expansion of the administrative infrastructure by which Nepal's rural hinterlands were governed. Small-scale industry was also being developed in some outlying towns, as well. Among the new towns in west-central Nepal were Tansen, Pokhara, and Bandipur. It is Bandipur, in Tanahu district, and its intimate relationship with the Marsyangdi Valley hinterland north of it which especially interests us here.

Bandipur: Bandipur's recent history is closely correlated with the rise of the contemporary gateway town of Dumre, and before that with the former gateway communities of Narayanghat and Deoghat. The most detailed descriptions of the socio-economic history of Bandipur appear in Sharma (1976) and Blaikie et al. (1976a).

Bandipur town is strategically situated on top of a ridge at approximately 1200 meters elevation (c. 4000 feet) on the old north-south Lamjung trade route. To its south the steep Mahabharat Range drops away to the low inner Terai (Rapti Valley) and to its north lies the low valley of the Marsyangdi River (at 500 meters, or less than 2000 feet elevation). Bandipur was originally founded in 1830 as a small-scale textile manufacturing town by Newars from Bhaktapur in the eastern Kathmandu Valley. The Newars established and promoted the local production of cotton as the raw material for their industry for many years.

Because of Bandipur's opportune trading location the Newars also pursued local and long distance commercial interests and after 1870, with the merchants "operating as middlemen on the north-south trade route ... the 'town' grew in size and importance" (Blaikie et al. 1976a:7.2). By the end of the 19th century it became one of three major trade centers of the larger west-central trade region. During this time the gateway to Bandipur and to the Marsyangdi hinterland remained at Deoghat at the northern edge of the Rapti Valley.

Despite its strategic gateway position, however, Deoghat did not prosper to the degree that Bandipur did. Rather, Deoghat (and other Terai and inner Terai communities like it) suffered from slow growth and seasonal decline. During the heat of the Monsoon (June-September), when the malarial scourge of the Terai was most severe, the higher and cooler hill towns such as Bandipur were far more attractive places to live and work. In a sense, Deoghat was only a true and actively functioning gateway during the dry, cool winter season (October-May) when the bulk of trade by human portage was conducted into the northern hinterland. During the monsoon, this gateway shrunk in importance and its supporting population (both merchant middlemen and porters) retreated to the more hospitable hills, principally to Bandipur.

Deoghat as a gateway, and Bandipur as its summer counterpart and the hinterland's largest and most prosperous settlement, remained relatively secure in their complementary positions as seasonally-conditioned points of commerce until the mid-20th century. By that time, the economic foundations of both towns were beginning to be undercut by changing conditions beyond their control. Several factors led to their eventual decline.

For one, the Bandipur textile industry suffered gradual collapse due to local labour disputes and rising prices for Indian raw materials which, by 1940, had completely replaced dependence on locally grown cotton. At about the same time, Indian railway links into southern Nepal were developed and motor roads were being cut through to the inner Terai. This latter factor, combined with an active programme of malaria eradication begun in the mid-1950s, soon opened the fertile Rapti Valley to large scale settlement by landless peasants migrating out from the middle hills (Sharma 1976).

Blake et al. (1976a:7.4) report that at this time "a number of Newars from Bandipur moved down to establish businesses in Narayanghat" in the Rapti Valley near the old gateway community of Deoghat. Narayanghat was, for them, an attractive new opportunity as an obvious center of growth for the region. It was linked to India by a new road, malaria was in decline, and the local population was rapidly growing. Narayanghat's rise led directly to Deoghat's decline, and Narayanghat quickly became the primary gateway to the Marsyangdi region.

The importance of the entrepreneurial Newars of Bandipur throughout the process of gateway evolution and change cannot be overestimated. In addition to their dominant role in the development of Narayanghat (and later of Dumre), Bandipur's Newar merchants were also closely involved in the gradual and less dramatic development of the various major and minor nodes of trade (bazaars) throughout the hinterland region at the north. In a very real way, the history

of gateway-hinterland relations in this region has long been dominated and controlled by the Newars of Bandipur.

During the 18th and early 19th centuries, hinterland bazaars were beginning to be settled and developed all along the Marsyangdi River. Through their aggressive establishment of a network of social and economic ties, Newars from Bandipur captured the growing interior trade here by placing their own kinsmen and affinal relatives in the incipient trading towns, such as Tarkughat, Besisahar, Kunchha and Khudi. They also established relations with non-Newari traders of the region through the institution of mit, a well known form of ritual or fictive brotherhood in Nepal (Okada 1957). Hence, at least as far north as Khudi and Bahundada (the northernmost Newar and Brahmin outposts, respectively) in Lamjung district, the Bandipur Newars and their kinsmen, agents and trade friends controlled the bulk of the trade and the distribution of imported goods. Beyond Bahundada and in some of the other remote villages and valleys of the region, Gurungs and Bhotias dominated local trade, but many of them actively sought and used mit-brotherhood ties and other sorts of economic and trade relations with the Newars to enhance their own commercial enterprises.

Meanwhile, Bandipur prospered. In 1963, after inauguration of the Panchayat system of government by His Majesty King Mahendra, Bandipur was designated the Tanahu District Headquarters. This created a new kind of growth. Civil and administrative officers and their families were posted there and as the district bureaucracy grew, a hospital and a high school were built in Bandipur to support it. Within the decade, however, road construction dealt Bandipur a severe economic blow from which it has not recovered.

The Prithvi Rajmarg: As early as 1957 and 1958 plans were being made in Nepal to construct several major roads through the country's midlands. Among them was the Prithvi Rajmarg, a highway designed to link Kathmandu and Pokhara. By the mid-1960s, the People's Republic of China had agreed to construct the 174 kilometer road, and it was completed in 1972 (Stiller and Yadav 1979:228 ff.).

Part of the new road passed through central Tanahu district at the bottom (north side) of the steep Bandipur ridge, neatly by-passing the town altogether and quickly destroying Bandipur's well being. The change came in two steps. First, while the road was under construction in 1969, the Tanahu District Headquarters offices were moved downhill to Damauli, 16 kilometers west of Bandipur on the new road. With that, the prominence of Bandipur in district affairs was lost.⁷ Second, within three years, the bulk of Bandipur's trade had also shifted to the new road. The southernmost part of the old north-south Lamjung trade route had been completely circumvented by the new road, leaving Bandipur isolated and cut off:

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... Bandipur bazaar, previously the main supplier of traded goods to the northern hills is now reduced to a local trading centre. Commercial activities were physically relocated on the roadside after the introduction of /the/ highway. Now the distribution of imported goods to the northern hills is being done by Dumre and Bimalnagar bazaars. These markets are also supplying goods to fulfill the /remaining/ demand of Bandipur and surrounding areas. /Sharma 1976: Appendix C, n.p./

As a result, both Bandipur and Narayanghat suffered instant decline (although Narayanghat had other commercial reserves to fall back on, and was cushioned from the disaster that overtook Bandipur). In their stead, Dumre bazaar (4 kilometers north of Bandipur) and neighbouring Bimalnagar and Bhansar (1 and 2 kilometers from Dumre, respectively) rose quickly to prominence in local and regional trade. Dumre became overnight the principal gateway community to the Mar-syangdi hinterland, as the new southern terminus in the on-going north-south trade.

Bandipur today remains greatly reduced in size, serving as a small local center of commerce for the hill villages in its immediate vicinity. Between 1954 (at the peak of Bandipur's prosperity on the eve of the rise of Narayanghat) and 1975 (following the opening of the new road), Bandipur's population dropped by two thirds, from 14,796 to 4,795 persons (Sharma 1976: Appendix A, Table 2.4). It continues to maintain the district hospital and high school, and recently acquired a two-year college of Arts and Sciences and a Nurses College. These developments, plus the fairweather road which has been constructed linking Bandipur with the Prithvi Rajmarg, may indicate revival. Meanwhile, however, Dumre has become the major transport center and the primary gateway to the north.

Dumre and its hinterland: Prior to construction of the Prithvi Rajmarg, there was no town of Dumre. When I first visited the area along the footpath to Bandipur from Lamjung in 1964, I passed through Bhansar and descended two kilometers through a dense sal (Shorea robusta) forest to several inns (bhatti) where travellers took refreshment, ate, and/or spent the night at the base of the steep Bandipur hill. The site of those inns is now lost in the present booming sprawl of Dumre, and much of the sal forest has been cut down to provide local building materials.

In 1972 and again in 1980 when I revisited Dumre, it was a bustling trade center. Its two-storey wood and concrete buildings, shops, inns, residences, and offices line both sides of the roadway. Brightly coloured signs in Nepali and English announce to all who pass the variety of goods and services available, e.g., cold drinks,

food, hotels and general merchandise. Busses regularly disembark passengers from Pokhara and Kathmandu and receive others who have just arrived by foot and who are bound for intermediate or more distant destinations. (It is a five-hour express bus ride to Kathmandu and a two-hour ride to Pokhara from Dumre).

Great quantities of bulk merchandise in boxes, bundles, and barrels are off-loaded at Dumre from trucks arriving from India and the Terai via Pokhara (on the Siddhartha Rajmarg) and from Kathmandu. Here the bulk is broken and trans-shipped by human porter or pony train north into the hinterland along the Marsyangdi River. Some of the goods are locally consumed, some are carried up to Bandipur and vicinity, but most of them are bound for the remote towns and villages of Tanahu, Gorkha, Lamjung and Manang district, up to a week or ten days' walk distance. Goods include imports from India and China and merchandise of Nepalese manufacture. They include cooking utensils, lanterns and ready-to-wear garments; dry goods such as grain, flour and spices, crackers and cigarettes; rope, basketry, cement and bolts of cloth; and miscellaneous exotic (and expensive) items such as beer, soft drinks, tinned fruit and candies.

Both the types and the volume of goods typically funnelled through roadside gateway towns such as Dumre, and the reasons for travel on the roads and by-ways which link them to the hinterlands, are the subjects of an exhaustive series of reports prepared by the Overseas Development Group. Those reports should be consulted for greater detail for the period of the mid-1970s (see Blaikie et al. 1976a, 1976b, 1979, and Seddon 1979).

It is interesting to note the types of travel that people engage in both on and off the Prithvi Rajmarg, at and near towns like Dumre. Based partly on a list of "Reasons for Travel" in one report (Blaikie et al. 1976a: Table 7.XIII, p. 7.46) and on my own observations, there seem to be six types of traditional travellers: rural peasants, professional porters, merchants and their agents or representatives, government officials, pilgrims bound for mountain shrines or sacred lakes, and persons involved in the military (including those on leave and pensioners). (There is no particular order to the list). Obviously, these categories are not exclusive, and a pensioned ex-Gurkha soldier, for example, might conceivably turn up at one time or another as a rural peasant, porter, merchant, pilgrim, or government employee.

In recent years, since the Overseas Development Group research was completed, yet another non-traditional type of traveller has arrived with considerable prominence in this region -- the Western tourist or trekker (along with Nepalese support personnel such as guides and porters). Trekking along the Marsyangdi trade route has been very popular among Western travellers since the mid-1970s. It

is a scenic route which ascends directly to the mountainous district of Manang (only recently opened to foreigners). Many trekkers make a complete circuit by passing up the Marsyangdi River trek and trade route through Manang district, over Thorung Pass (5300 meters, or c. 17,500 feet) to the pilgrim shrine of Muktinath, through Thak Khola, and eventually terminating at Pokhara; or in reverse, terminating at Dumre. Even in tourism and trekking, Pokhara and Dumre have maintained their gateway status. It should be noted, however, that the visible impacts of Westerners on this trade route are both very new and very narrow -- significant, but restricted, in the main, to the confines of the trail and its principle towns and villages. Not much economic impact from tourism can be observed in remoter villages even as close as an hour or two off the main route through Lamjung district.

In contrast, the impact of the government bureaucracy, the other major category of travellers on the trails north of Dumre, is quite widespread (cf. Blaikie et al. 1976a: 7.12ff.). Its impact is most clearly seen at Besisahar, the Lamjung District Headquarters town. In 1972, Besisahar was a relatively sleepy little bazaar, perched on a plain overlooking the Marsyangdi River. It was a small center of local trade and had only recently become the district administrative headquarters.⁷

Today, Besisahar resembles many other fast-growing district towns in Nepal: it supports a large and very obvious construction industry which in turn reflects the influx of government employees and the need for housing and office buildings for such departments of government as education, forestry, health, banking, agriculture and local development, as well as schools, hospitals and prisons. New two and three-storey concrete and stone buildings are springing up all along the main street of town and outward on lands that were formerly fertile rice fields. The population of Besisahar is growing rapidly. It includes Newar merchants (of Bandipur origins), civil servants of various caste and ethnic groups (from Kathmandu), and recently "urbanized" rural villagers of Brahmin-Chhetri and untouchable castes as well as the predominant ethnic Gurungs of the region (from surrounding villages).

Unlike the thin or narrow impact of tourism and trekking in the district, the government bureaucracy, representing development and modernization, is constantly observable throughout the district in tangible fact and in conversations heard even in some of the most remote villages. Development ideas and programmes spread outward from the district headquarters town, but ultimately the impetus comes from Kathmandu, funnelled directly through the gateway at Dumre.

Discussion

The term "gateway" and the use of the gateway model have gained considerable currency in recent geographical and anthropological literature as explanatory and classificatory devices which are used in the investigation and analysis of interregional exchange of goods, services, people and ideas (Burghardt 1971, Hirth 1978, Kohler 1980). In the specific context of modernization and change in the Marsyangdi River hinterland of Nepal, the gateway model helps in the analysis of three sorts of change:

- (1) Change which reflects a shift from a previously intricate but essentially uncomplicated network of footpaths, to a contemporary situation complicated by the recent and rapid development of motor roads which cut directly through the region.
- (2) Change from an isolated and traditional rural society, to one impacted by the extensive bureaucratization of rural Nepal as part of an active unification and modernization effort by the central government in Kathmandu.
- (3) Change from a previously reciprocal exchange-based local economy with many discontinuities vis-a-vis the national core economy, to a more centrally controlled redistributive economy.

The first of these changes has been described in this paper in terms of certain physical and historical changes in the location and importance of gateways and other communities and of the improvement of transport and communications in west-central Nepal. Since the beginning of trade through the Marsyangdi River valley, the location of the primary gateway to the region has changed from Deoghat and Bandipur, to Narayanghat, to Dumre. Dumre bazaar is now only one decade old, and it stands as a dramatic example of change commensurate with rapid modernizing change. Beyond Dumre, throughout the hinterland it serves, equally far-reaching changes can be observed and anticipated. Many of the small interior bazaars north of the road have recently developed into important centers of trade and/or secondary gateways in their own right. Among the most important of these bazaars are Tarkughat, Sundar, Besisahar, Dalal, Khudi, and Bahundada along the Marsyangdi River. Each is a strategically placed commercial center; all but Bahundada and Sundar are located at bridges which funnel trade and communications to them; and each serves as a central place bazaar and as a secondary gateway to distant hill and mountain communities beyond it.

Among these interior trade centers is one, Besisahar, which is rapidly developing as both a commercial and administrative town and which, in the near future, could conceivably eclipse Dumre. A fair-weather road is being built between Dumre and Besisahar, which will

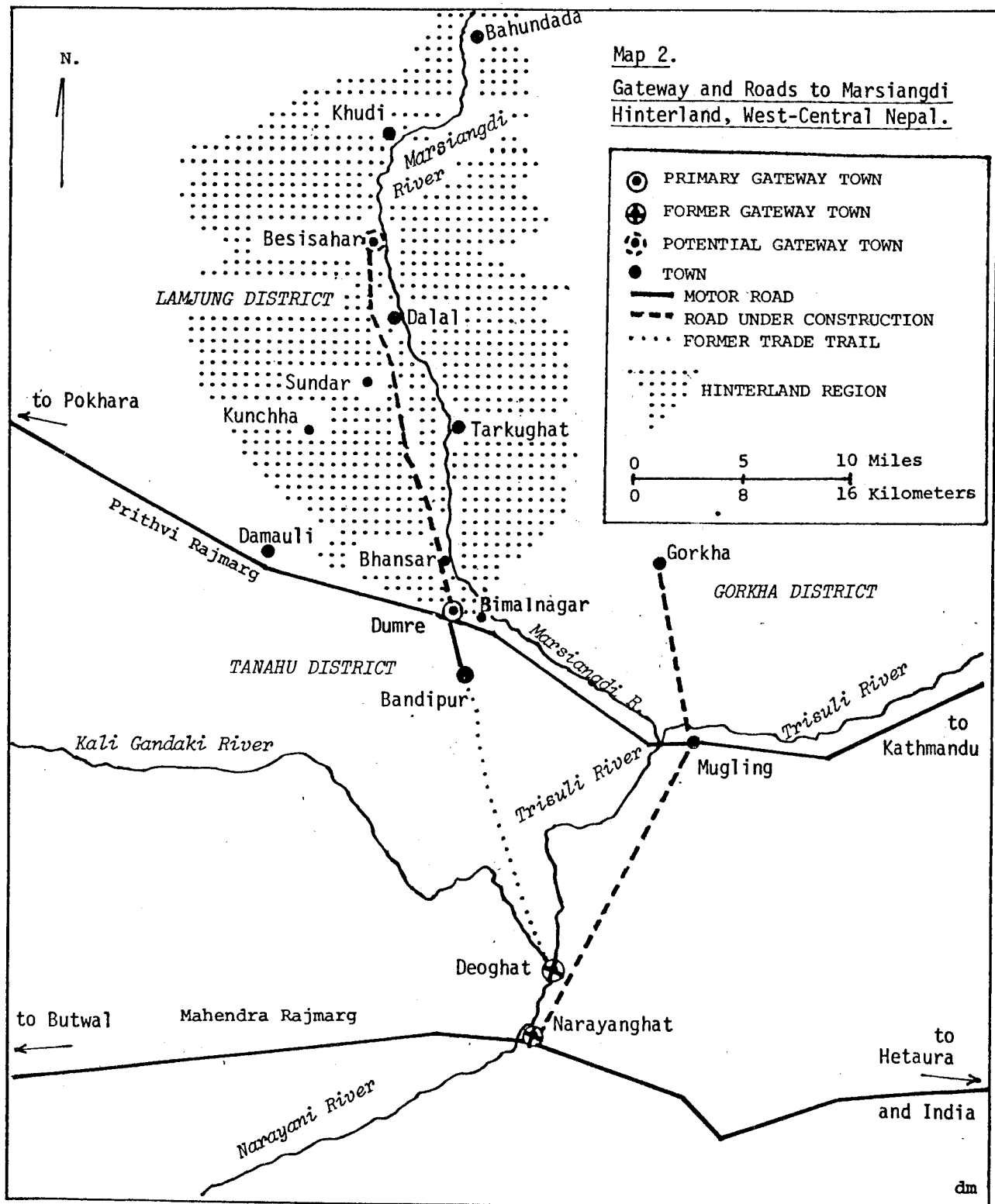
open up the Marsyangdi Valley to its center. The road awaits only a few remaining kilometers of construction and several bridges to be complete and open to dry season motor traffic, and there already is talk of paving it for all season travel. The breaking of bulk at Besisahar -- a primary consideration in the location of any gateway town -- may begin by the mid-1980s. If paving of this road for all weather traffic is accomplished, this former sleepy little district town may replace Dumre altogether as the Marsyangdi's principal gateway. The progressive evolution of gateways directly into the Marsyangdi hinterland is demonstrated on Map 2.⁸

A second major change is the extensive bureaucratization of Nepal by the central government at both the national core and in the rural hinterlands. Since the Gorkha conquest of the 18th and early 19th centuries, and especially in the past quarter century, the central government in Kathmandu has progressively increased its administrative control in an effort to unify Nepal more fully and to improve the social and economic conditions of the rural peasantry. Some aspects of this bureaucratization process have been analyzed and described in the detailed and controversial works of the Overseas Development Group (particularly in Blaikie et al. 1979 and Seddon 1979; cf. Messerschmidt n.d.). The rapid bureaucratization of rural Nepal is one of the causal factors in the changes affecting gateway-hinterland relations, especially in terms of the types and volume of goods, ideas, services, and people which ply the roads and trails.

The third sort of change involves rapid evolution of Nepal's rural economy. Although this has not been addressed specifically in this paper, it should be noted that one of the major results of road building and gateway change and evolution is the potential lessening or removal of the economic discontinuities which in the rural areas have for so long been a major block to economic growth and well-being. This sort of change has both positive and negative results (for commentary on the negative, see Blaikie et al. 1979 and Seddon 1979).

To conclude, the use of the gateway model in our brief discussion has allowed us to focus attention on specific locations -- the entry and exit points for a hinterland -- as reflections of change and modernization on a larger scale. We have also seen that beyond a primary gateway, various incipient nodes of trade may develop over time into important bazaar and administrative towns, eventually becoming central places and/or primary or secondary gateways in their own right. Or, just the opposite may occur as some communities decline in importance and size (as in the case of Bandipur). However this process of evolution and devolution of towns is played out, much of the socio-economic and cultural history of a region, and a better understanding of the contemporary situation, can be beneficially examined by using the gateway concept.

Gateway-Hinterland Relations



Footnotes

1. See the published reports of the Overseas Development Group (East Anglia University) under Blaikie et al. in the Bibliography for detailed discussion and analysis of growth and change in west-central Nepal. See also Seddon (1979), Sharma (1976) and S.B. Gurung et al. (1977).
2. Some of these distinctions may be questionable for Nepal, but will not be pursued here.
3. The central place of Pokhara has recently been described in terms of a "growth center" vis-a-vis the development of greater Gandaki Zone and its hinterland. "The term and concept of 'Growth Centre' denote places of various size in which social economic activities and services can be located for the development of the hinterland areas"; it is a place "which provides services effectively and wholly as a centre for trade and services including government services, education, health, communication, transport, finance and other basic needs for the surrounding hinterland areas" (S.B. Gurung et al. 1977:13). It has also been called a "poly-function" settlement which caters to the diverse needs of its hinterland (S.B. Gurung et al. 1977: 13).
4. Pack trains using small ponies are mostly operated by entrepreneurial Thakali traders in west-central Nepal. Occasional military pack horses and mules are also seen on some of the interior trails of the rural hinterlands. Bush air service should also be noted, although air transport of goods to rural Nepal is severely limited by high costs. For the central and upper Marsyangdi River region only two airfields exist, one in western Gorkha district at Paluntar and one in upper (western) Manang district (primarily for use in mountaineering activities). The bulk of goods transported into the Marsyangdi hinterland is by human porter.
5. True urbanization in Nepal (outside of Kathmandu Valley) involving a migrant peasantry is a very recent and very small development.
6. The business community of Bandipur reportedly did not give up the district offices easily or passively and there were incidents of physical violence and at least one death during attempts by Bandipur residents to stop the move (Iltis 1976: III-2).

7. Kunchha bazaar, 16 kilometers due south of Besisahar (but 8 kilometers west of the river trade route), had been Lamjung's District Headquarters during most of the 1960s.
8. A further complication in this scenario is the soon to be completed all weather road between Mugling and Narayanghat, and a feeder north into the heart of Gorkha district (see Map 2). Although it seems doubtful that the Mugling-Narayanghat road will cause a shift of primary gateway functions back to Narayanghat, the economic futures of both Narayanghat and Mugling (and Gorkha) will be affected and should be carefully watched. Likewise, the effects of reduced truck traffic at Pokhara (from the Terai to Dumre and other points on the Prithvi Rajmarg) will also be noticeable. Some observers predict that traffic on the old Tribhuvan Rajpath route from Hetaura to Naubise and Kathmandu may also decline as truckers re-route through Narayanghat and Mugling.

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Growing Old in Helambu: Aging, Migration and Family Structure Among Sherpas

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and
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Tibetan culture views becoming old in a positive way, as a time when the cares and worries of managing a household are lessened and shifted to one's child or children. Aging is seen ideally as a process of disengagement from everyday worldly concerns. It is a time when persons devote more time and attention to acquiring merit by religious activities in preparation for the future, i.e. for the rebirth that follows death. Although all of one's productive and household work does not usually cease, the worries associated with the struggle for subsistence should decrease substantially. Ideally the elderly should live their later years as respected members of extended families in which their children look after the day to day activities. Tibetan values and norms, moreover, hold that one's parents in particular, and the elderly in general, should be treated with kindness, consideration and respect. Tibetans, for example, frequently say things like:

pha ma'i bka' drin gsab dgos red
One must repay the kindness of one's parents.

Sherpa society, despite its unquestioned inclusion in the broad category of Tibetan culture, appears to deviate markedly from this. Two ethnologists who studied Sherpa society in Solu-Khumbu have suggested that the status of the elderly there is low. Ortner (1978), for example, wrote that a basic conflict in Sherpa society pits parents against their children, and that parents when they become old are left propertyless and abandoned. She sees this as one of the "great tragic themes of Sherpa culture" (47), and observes:

In real life, as one gets old and one's children marry away; as one's property disperses bit by bit with each of their marriages; as one's physical powers, including one's sexuality, wanes, and as the social structural realities of lay life are such that in fact one is not taken care of by one's children but is left to fend for one's self... (1978:52).

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Haimendorf (1978:87) writes that "An occasional casualness towards aged parents though by no means frequent, mars to some extent the otherwise pleasant picture of Sherpa family life."

Several possible explanations exist for this apparent contradiction. First it is possible that Sherpas are not "typical" examples of Tibetan culture and the current "status" of the elderly there is merely a reflection of their different traditional value and normative system. While no cultural "ideal" such as that regarding the status of the elderly in Tibetan culture is ever completely realized with respect to all individuals, the Sherpas seem to deviate markedly. Other Tibetan societies for which data exist do not exhibit this pattern. In Limi, a remote Tibetan speaking area in N.W. Nepal studied by Goldstein (1975, 1976, ms.), only 3 (of 26) males over the age of 50 lived alone in the village of Tsang. One of these was a monk who was a Tibetan refugee, another a man recently separated from a polyandrous marriage, and the third an unmarried man who had recently returned from years in India. The elderly there were treated with dignity and held positions of authority and had relatively high social status. In Dzinga, another Tibetan area 3 days south of Limi, none lived alone. Ross (personal communication) reports that the 21 persons over 60 years of age reside in 13 households of which 10 include married children with their spouses and children, 2 contain unmarried children, and 1 female has no separate household, residing instead with her employers.

Limi and Dzinga, however, are areas more traditional than Solu-Khumbu. This leads to a second possible explanation for the contrast, namely, that important changes which have occurred in the recent past have influenced Sherpa society and culture and altered traditional patterns. The purpose of this paper is to present evidence collected among the Sherpas of Helambu supporting this second alternative. It argues that the current problematic status of the elderly in Helambu and Solu-Khumbu is the result of the indirect impact of modernization.

Over a six week period during July-August 1979, a pilot investigation on aging, activity and dependence was conducted in Helambu in the contiguous Sherpa villages of Norbugyang and Pemagyang (both pseudonyms) situated at an altitude of about 8600' about two days walk from Kathmandu.

These two villages together consisted of 75 households containing 373 persons of whom 257 were in residence at the time of our stay. A striking observation was the large number of elderly people living alone. Eleven households (15%) consisted of one elderly person, and in seven of these, the lone elderly person was over 70 years of age. Another 6 (8%) households consisted of an old couple living alone.

The study focussed on 37 persons over the age of fifty. Twelve of these were in their 50's; 11 in their 60's; 11 in their 70's; 3 in their 80's. Of these, 60% of the individuals over 60 and 73% of those over 70 resided alone or with a spouse, and 31% of those over 60 and 33% of those over 70 lived alone. This sample includes 86% of the persons 60 years or older living in the villages.

We endeavored to investigate and measure what the elderly do and what factors underlie their peculiar household structure. An activity-work survey of 30 different elderly persons aged 50 and over was conducted using 24 hour recall interviews on 15 different days during the peak agricultural season. This yielded a total of 69 person-days of activity recalls. The subjects in this survey were asked to enumerate all their activities and meals for the previous day. This was supplemented with spot-check direct observation. Since western time concepts are not well developed in this society and since very few persons had (and/or used) watches, the time dimension was organized according to the Sherpas' own division of daily time. They discussed their activities with reference to their four daily meals. For example, they would normally state they had worked in the fields from the 2nd meal (about 10 a.m.) to the third meal (about 3 p.m.). The time spent performing activities such as field-work was estimated based on the average length of time (as we measured it) between these culturally delimited meal times.

Sherpa work and activity were categorized into two general types:¹

1. PRODUCTIVE ACTIVITIES

A. Heavy Work

i. Agricultural field labor

Agricultural field labour during the period of observation consisted almost entirely of digging up potatoes. Sherpas use an iron hoe with an inwardly curved blade to do this. The handle is about 2 feet long and the blade about 2" x 12". To use this implement, the worker must bend over almost horizontally from the waist and dig in that position.

ii. Carrying Loads

This involved either a basket of potatoes, or fertilizer or grass. The lightest load we spot-measured was 32 lbs. and the heaviest was 77 lbs.

iii. Wage Labour

This involved construction and carpentry work.

B. Moderate Work

This consisted of herding, milking animals, feeding animals, cutting loads of grass (but not carrying it back), carrying meals to the field for workers, collecting mushrooms in the forest, office work, weaving, etc.

2. HOUSEHOLD AND SELF-MAINTENANCE WORK

A. Heavy Work: Carrying water, leaves, firewood.

B. Moderate Work: Cooking, cleaning, washing clothes, sweeping house, etc.

Table I illustrates the heavy work performed by the elderly subjects in the study. Ninety-one percent of the person-days worked by men and 87% of those worked by women including heavy labour defined as at least one instance of either carrying a heavy load or fieldwork (see Table I). The data show also that there is no significant difference between the heavy labour patterns of elderly persons 50 years of age and those over 70 years of age. Elderly Sherpas of 70 years and over were as likely to do fieldwork and carry loads as those 50 years of age. The amount of hours spent at fieldwork is also instructive. When agricultural work was performed, the average number of hours worked was 4.1 hours/day for males and 3.6 hours/day for females.

Although stress tests and formal health surveys have not yet been conducted, a number of factors indicate good health status and physical fitness. Systolic and diastolic blood pressure did not increase significantly with age and the average blood pressure for males over 60 was 114/77 and for females over 60 was 125/86. Few of the elderly had arthritic enlargement of their fingers (Heberden's and Bouchard's nodes), most males had no finger joint contracture while half of the females did have finger joint contracture to the extent that they were unable to completely flatten one or more fingers. There was only one case of partial blindness (the 87 year-old man mentioned below) and one of deafness, and no overt senility at all. The elderly communicated cogently and had no apparent though or memory disorders. Only one male was too ill to perform heavy labour during the period we observed and he was hypertensive and, based on the symptoms he reported, appeared to have recently suffered a heart attack.

TABLE I
AGE AND SEX DISTRIBUTION OF THE NUMBER AND PERCENT OF PERSON-DAYS IN WHICH
HEAVY WORK (FIELDWORK AND CARRYING) WAS DONE

Age	Fieldwork					Carrying					Heavy Work (both field work & carrying)				
	50 (%)	60 (%)	70 (%)	80 (%)	TOTAL (%)	50 (%)	60 (%)	70 (%)	80 (%)	TOTAL (%)	50 (%)	60 (%)	70 (%)	80 (%)	TOTAL (%)
Males	None	5(31)	2(29)	4(44)	1(33)	12(34)	2(12)	1(14)	2(22)	0(0)	5(14)	1(6)	1(14)	1(11)	3(9)
	Yes	11(69)	5(71)	5(56)	2(67)	23(66)	14(88)	6(86)	7(78)	3(100)	30(86)	15(94)	6(86)	8(89)	32(91)
Females	None	1(17)	4(44)	1(20)	0(0)	6(29)	3(50)	3(33)	1(4)	0(0)	7(33)	1(17)	2(22)	1(20)	4(19)
	Yes	5(83)	5(55)	4(80)	1(100)	15(71)	3(50)	6(67)	4(80)	1(100)	14(66)	5(83)	7(78)	4(80)	17(81)

A typical day in the life of the eldest male in the village is illustrative of the vitality and self-reliance the elderly generally exhibit. Dorje Jakri is 87 years old. He had three sons and two daughters but all three sons have died. His wife died three years ago at the age of 80 and he now lives alone although his adult grandsons (son's sons and their families) live in houses adjacent to his in the village. He does all his housework and cooking, gets his own water and firewood and works in his fields although most of the land he owns is let out on a lease-basis. On the day, we interviewed him he indicated that on the previous day he had performed the following activities:

He got up late when others in the village were already up and about. He walked to the water tap near his house and got a full jug of water (about 35 lbs.) which he carried back to his household. Then he made a fire, boiled water and churned a pot of Tibetan style tea (tea with salt and butter). He reheated the previous night's leftovers (rice and potatoes) and ate that with the tea as his first meal. After this he went to one of his fields to dig potatoes. He carried back a load of about 32 lbs. and commented that he thinks he misses a lot of the potatoes since he is virtually blind in his left eye. He then walked back to his field carrying a load of manure which he spread on the field in preparation for planting radish. Then he returned home and spread out the potatoes he had carried back earlier to dry on the porch. After this he walked to the water tap, washed his hands and feet, returned home, and again made a fire. He cooked a pot of potatoes and ate them with salt and hot chili for his second meal. He also had one cup of locally distilled liquor (rakshi) with the meal. After washing the pots he again went to the field this time to plant radishes. He worked at this for three or four hours and then returned to his home where he repacked the potatoes he had left out earlier and carried them into the house. It was about 4 p.m. by then. He drank another cup of liquor and ate the leftovers from his second meal. He didn't go back to the fields to work any more and stayed home for the remainder of the day and cooked dinner in the evening.

Despite their high level of economically productive activity, their relative physical fitness, and their ownership of agricultural land, many elderly Helambu Sherpa overtly expressed unhappiness with

their lot. Several spontaneously volunteered that they wished they were dead and others commented that their children had abandoned them and that the young in general did not care about the elderly. We suggest that this unhappiness is in large part a result of a major transformation in the traditional Sherpa family system due primarily to long-term out migration.

Despite the emphasis both Haimendorf and Ortner place on the nuclear family as the heart of the Sherpa family system, it seems clear from a careful reading of these authors that extended family types traditionally were the cultural ideal. The two principal types of extended families known in the Sherpa literature are fraternal polyandrous families and stem families. Fraternal polyandry (two or more brothers jointly sharing a wife) is a family type found throughout most areas of Tibetan culture. According to Haimendorf (1979:68) it still comprised 8% of the marriages in Khumbu in 1957 and according to Oppitz (1968, as cited in Ortner 1978:173) it comprised 5% of those in Solu. Haimendorf, moreover, writes that Sherpas considered polyandry a "time-honoured and highly respectable device enacted to prevent fragmentation of property and foster the solidarity of brothers..." (Ibid). Fraternal polyandry accomplishes this because males in Sherpa and Tibetan society have demand rights to a share of the family's arable land. By marrying polyandrously, they leave this right in abeyance and avoid splitting the family estate. Goldstein (1971, 1975 and 1976) has discussed in detail the motivations underlying brothers' decisions to remain together (marry polyandrously) or marry monogamously, and it suffices to indicate that a key factor underlying a decision to split the family is whether brothers perceive that they can supplement their inherited land by other economic activities so that within a reasonable time they can attain a comfortable style of life.

In Tibet, and among Sherpas, another traditional pattern was for at least one son to remain with his parents in their natal home. This remaining son is expected to marry patrilocally and to care for the parents as they age. When his parents die, he inherits their share of land together with the house and other movable possessions. In most Tibetan groups it is the eldest son who remains in the natal homestead but among Sherpas, it appears to be the youngest son (Haimendorf, 1979; Ortner, 1978; and Lang and Lang 1971).

It is the youngest son remaining in the parents' house on whom a father depends for continued support, and such a youngest son is therefore usually most closely attached to his father (Haimendorf 1979:86).

Thus, a significant percentage of households in a Sherpa village are composed of three generations--

old parents, youngest son and his wife, and their children (Ortner 1978:20).

Traditionally, therefore, it was the expectation of parents in Solu-Khumbu that they would be living with at least one of their children in their later years and that they would control a share of arable land until they die. But if this is the case, the large number of elderly folks living alone or with a spouse in Helambu is anomalous as is the pathetic situation of the elderly reported by Ortner for Solu Sherpas:

Thus elderly Sherpa parents are ultimately more or less abandoned, or at least neglected and treated with some callousness (Ortner 1978:47).

Dr. Ortner (47) argues that the betrayal of aging parents is "a virtually inevitable reflex of the structure and developmental cycle of the Sherpa family as a tightly bounded corporation." This, in turn, she linked to the centrality of the nuclear family unit and the main emphasis placed on generational independence and autonomy. She writes:

The private-property owning, highly independent nuclear family is the "atom" of Sherpa social structure ... a whole range of cultural and structural factors emphasize the ideal autonomy and self-sufficiency of the nuclear family unit. Ensconced in its own house and operating as a self-sufficient enterprise, the nuclear family is both the normatively valued institution and the statistically prevalent form (39).

The problem, as she sees it, develops when sons reach marriageable age and part of the family property must be transferred to them. She observes:

And while the whole process climaxes late in life, with the marriage of the last child, it begins to unfold much earlier, as each child's marriage cuts a slice out of the family and its estate. The parents, as we saw, try to forestall the disintegration of the unit as long as possible (47).

Ortner (1978:52) describes this process as one of bit by bit dispersement of property leading to parent-child conflict and ultimately abandonment of the now propertyless parents.

But, this is difficult to reconcile since we have already seen how both she and Haimendorf agree that extended families were the

norm traditionally. If fraternal polyandry was selected then there would be no division of the family property, and if a stem family was selected (with the youngest son remaining), the parents would not only retain their house but also both their share and their son's share. The elderly would be neither propertyless nor alone.

Dr. Ortner attempts to deal with this in passing by implying that children are inconsiderate and cruel to their parents even when they live in the same household, and that parents are victims. In other words, despite the inheritance and family norms, children simply abuse their parents who are portrayed as helpless beings driven out of their home. Since Dr. Ortner presents no data on the frequency of the elderly living alone, one can only take the statement of abandonment at face value:

For the inheritance rule is such that the youngest son will receive the parental house. He is theoretically obliged to feed and care for the parents out of this last share of their estate. In fact, however, this arrangement often works out badly for the old people - They are reduced to the status of dependents, and sometimes almost servants, in the son's household, and there tends to be friction between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law. The Sherpas are quite conscious of these problems, and seem to expect little from their children in their old age. They may instead retain a small piece of land and buy or build a small house, even an animal shed, for themselves, so as to remain independent for as long as possible ... Thus elderly Sherpa parents are ultimately more or less abandoned, or at least neglected and treated with callousness (46-47, emphasis added).

This argument that Sherpa parents are helpless and without rights to land and property vis-a-vis their children is surprising from another vantage point. Drs. Ortner and Haimendorf indicate that all males are copartners in the family land. Each has rights to a share of the family land. Thus, even if each of the sons marries and sets up an independent nuclear family, the parents should retain the parental home and a share of the land. If a stem family is established but then conflict develops and results in family fission, the son and father each would retain a share of the land and the father would legally be able to retain the house. This is the case throughout Tibetan society and was found in Helambu. Consequently, it is difficult to understand why there should be parents who are left "propertyless" in old age due to the callousness of their children since these children cannot legally abrogate the rights of the parents. Even, should conflict

occur in a stem family when a father is in his seventies and has already relinquished management control of the family to his son, theoretically the father still retains rights to his share of land -- either to work himself or lease or sell.

We contend that the current situation with regard to the elderly is not the result of structural contradictions inherent in traditional Sherpa (and by extension, Tibetan) culture, but rather is an artifact of indirect modernization that has transformed basic aspects of Sherpa culture and society. New economic opportunities have led to massive long-term and permanent emigration and have eroded the social position of parents by removing children who would normally live with them and by fostering individual independence vis-a-vis family unity and autonomy. As we shall argue below, new opportunities made children potentially independent of their parents and the natal village, while at the same time reducing the need or value to subordinate their wishes to the family unit. Let us briefly discuss these changes first in Solu-Khumbu and then in Helambu.

Nepal was closed to foreign travellers until 1951 and to mountaineers until 1953. Nevertheless, important changes had already begun to have an impact on the social and economic life of the Sherpa area of Solu-Khumbu fifty years earlier. The first Sherpas used in mountaineering as high altitude porters were recruited in Darjeeling, India in 1909 (Miller 1965:245) and it is clear that a number of Sherpas had already emigrated to Darjeeling by that year. Miller (Ibid) cites a figure of 3,450 Sherpas resident in Darjeeling District in 1901, 5,295 in 1941 and 8,998 in 1951. Haimendorf (1979: 4) has estimated that by 1947 there were about 7,000 Sherpas in Darjeeling District.

The main impetus for this migration appears to have been the wage-labour opportunities offered by portering on mountain climbing expeditions and trekking parties, recruitment for which centered in Darjeeling until Nepal opened in 1953:

How Sherpas came to settle at Darjeeling is not known in detail, but it would seem that at first it was the prospect of trade which drew Sherpas to Darjeeling and Kalimpong and that the association with mountaineering enterprises occurred at a time when they had already established themselves in the Darjeeling District. The first of these settlers belonged perhaps to the wave of emigrants from Solu who were responsible for the establishment of Sherpa communities in the Nepalese districts of Bhojpur and Dhankuta as well as in the region immediately east of the

Nepal-Darjeeling border. But once the news of the earnings of expedition porters spread to Khumbu, many enterprising young men, some alone and some accompanied by their wives, went to seek their fortunes in Darjeeling. There are few families in Khumbu which cannot name one kinsman or another settled in Darjeeling and when I started to compile genealogies and family histories, I was told of the men and women living there (Haimendorf 1975:85).

To poor but energetic and adventurous young men, expedition work offered unique possibilities. Previously, a Sherpa without land or capital could not hope to attain more than modest prosperity even in a lifetime's hard work ... But a successful high-altitude porter could, in a single season earn sufficient cash to engage in some modest trade deals or buy his first plot of land ... A further complaint by villagers against expedition porters was that many of the younger men used their earnings largely for themselves though they continued to live in a household maintained by the efforts of their brothers who worked on the family's land without having any personal cash income (Haimendorf 1975:86-87).

The impact of these new economic opportunities and the associated out-migration have been devastating for traditional Sherpa family structure:

The growing importance of cash earnings and the corresponding diminishment of the Sherpa's interest in preserving a family's landholdings and herds undivided seems to have affected their attitude toward polyandry (Haimendorf 1979:00).

This new income, first in Darjeeling and later in Nepal, has played a major role in eliminating fraternal polyandry in Solu and Khumbu as a form of marriage and family. While the history of change in Helambu is not nearly as well known as that of Solu-Khumbu, it is particularly instructive. Fraternal polyandry appears not to have been traditionally present but extended families with the youngest son were and are still the ideal. It appears that substantial emigration from Helambu began much later than in Solu-Khumbu, probably only after the Second World War. The last 20 years, however, have seen large-scale, long-term out-migration primarily to

India. The creation of a vast network of mountain highways in India and a booming construction trade have produced the new opportunities. As was the case in the early period of migration in Solu-Khumbu (Miller 1964), parents in Helambu tried (and still try) to keep their sons and daughters from migrating to Kathmandu and India. But the draw of income, new skills, excitement and the avoidance of what young people say is the tedium and harshness of farming, have drawn away substantial numbers from Helambu. Thirty one percent of the villagers of Pemagyang and Norbugyang were living outside the village on a long-term basis. In the younger age categories this was even higher with 36% of those 30-40 and 35% of those 20-30 living in India or Kathmandu.

This migration has produced a tremendous disruption in the Sherpa family system. In Helambu, youngest sons who would otherwise have remained with their parents in extended stem families leave, and even though they often plan someday to return permanently, the likelihood that the traditional extended family ideal of the elderly can be attained has been seriously diminished. The independence experienced while living abroad makes return to a subordinate position in an extended family difficult for children. Even when such sons return, we suggest that their tolerance of and respect for their parents is diminished and conflict culminating in separation is more likely than in traditional times. High mortality among emigrant Sherpas has probably exacerbated this situation. Speaking of the Darjeeling Sherpas in 1957, Haimendorf (1975:85) writes:

Living in quarters little better than the old-fashioned coolie lines of tea gardens, and exposed to contact with the crowds of an Indian bazaar, many Sherpas feel victim to tuberculosis, venereal diseases and other infectious ailments. In the healthy climate and comparative isolation of their mountain homes they had developed no immunity against diseases common in Indian towns...

It is reasonable to suggest that more younger sons die in India than would have died had they remained in Helambu and this further reduces the number of families who can achieve the ideal situation.

The situation with regard to the elderly living alone in Helambu, therefore, does not reflect the traditional cultural pattern. Elderly Sherpas were living alone not because of traditional values and norms but rather because they had to. Massive emigration has precluded the realization of the extended stem family since the sons who should be living with the parents are either residing in India, have died untimely deaths there, or have experienced independence and do not wish to live under the direct authority and financial management of their parents.

Examination of the elderly living alone and as couples in Helambu reveals that many of them, in fact, have living children. Of 17 such households, 2 had no children (one was a nun) and for two there is no information. Of the remaining 13 households, 9 have living sons and the other 4 have living daughters. In many cases there were also married grandchildren and/or siblings in the village. This raises an important question. Since family life is valued, in cases where the youngest son is living in India or had died, why then don't the elderly live with their other sons, or with an adult daughter or a married grandchild? The extensive out-migration reported for Helambu cannot, in and of itself, explain the presence of so many elderly folks living alone bitter and unhappy about their "abandonment."

The answer to this question lies in the Sherpa's own definition of dependency. Since dependency and aging is discussed in a separate paper (Beall and Goldstein 1981), it will suffice here to indicate that dependency can be conceptualized etically (from the observer's point of view) as well as emically (from the subject's point of view). Etically, dependency is a neutral continuum concept indicating the degree to which the elderly receive goods and services from others. From the point of view of the actors, however, very different types of goods, services, situations, etc., may be categorized as pejorative dependency in different societies. The Sherpa example illustrates this.

As elder sons in Helambu marry and separate from their parental household, it was indicated that they receive a share of the land and set up independent nuclear households that are considered socially and legally distinct from their natal ones. Haimendorf (1979: 86) comments on this for Khumbu Sherpas:

Elder sons and married daughters may visit the parents off and on and bring gifts of food and beer on feast days, but only in exceptional circumstances will they work for their parents without receiving the usual wage.

If, after all the elder sons separate, the youngest son migrates to India or dies, the elderly couple is left alone. At this juncture, however, it is considered culturally inappropriate for the elderly to move in with other children even if invited. To do so would be to abdicate their independence and demean their self-esteem. It would mean leaving their own house and turning over their fields to their son (and daughter-in-law). It would mean becoming a powerless and authorityless appendage to the son's household. As in our own society, long-term dependency has a strong pejorative connotation. When the indirect impact of modernization produced substantial numbers of old folks in just such a situation, they opted to reside alone despite the fact that they did not want to live that way and

were lonely and unhappy with their fate. They are bitter about the recent changes that have caused this transformation but have themselves been unable to ignore or redefine their cultural definition of dependency to accommodate the new situation.² The cultural expectations and aspirations of the elderly in Helambu are incongruent with the new reality in which they are immersed. The consequence of this is the anomalous situation of elderly who are hale, healthy, productive, and economically not wanting, but psychologically and emotionally maladapted. Although it is not possible to comment with certainty about this issue in Solu-Khumbu because of the lack of empirical data, it appears likely that the current unfortunate state of the elderly there parallels that of Helambu.

Conclusion

The unhappy state of the elderly in Sherpa society has been reported by both Professor Haimendorf and Professor Ortner as a "flaw" in Sherpa culture. This paper argues that this is an oversimplification. The current status of the elderly in Helambu (and presumably Solu-Khumbu) reflects not "traditional" culture, but the indirect impact of modernization and the world economic system. Despite the fact that the hills and mountains of Nepal are not "modernized" by any definition of that concept, economic and political changes in the adjacent areas have seriously affected the social life of these residents. The new economic and life-style opportunities in India and Kathmandu have acted as magnets drawing away substantial numbers of young people. The elderly left behind are placed in a new and precarious situation where the old forms of social support and maintenance are disappearing.

This situation has wider implications for the elderly in Nepal and other Third and Fourth World countries as it illustrates the manner in which the social, economic and cultural life of rural, agricultural areas in Third and Fourth World countries are not immune to changes in areas contiguous to them. It points up the need for concern regarding the fate of the elderly in Nepal and other Third World countries in the years ahead. In 1970, 45% of the persons 65 and older lived in the Less Developed Countries but by the year 2000 A.D., this will reverse and 58% will reside in the Third and Fourth World (Hauser 1975). At that time East and South Asia will house about 100 million elderly, as many as now exist in the entire world. It is unrealistic to assume that just because countries like Nepal are primarily rural and agricultural, the elderly will be taken care of by traditional social formations. In Nepal, the example of the Sherpas may represent a rather frightening portrait of the future. Moreover, it could be argued that the wealth and physical fitness of the elderly in Helambu have softened the negative effect of indirect modernization and focussed attention on psychological well-being and happiness rather than on survival. In rural areas with less wealth, present and future modernization may pose a serious threat to the level of subsistence of the elderly.

Footnotes

1. The types of activities coded represent only those performed during the period of our study. Obviously, other activities must be included to represent the entire annual cycle.
2. It is interesting to note, however, that certain aspects of the cultural system do appear to be changing. Many of the elderly indicated in response to our queries that they thought small families were better than large families. Their rationale for this was that since one cannot count on children to "look after parents" when they are old, i.e. live with them, the less sons a person has the more land he retains when he is old, and the more security he has. It is not surprising that there was general feeling among the old and young that family planning and sterilization were a good thing.

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The Humli-Khyampas of Far Western Nepal: A Study in Ethnogenesis

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The Humli-Khyampas of far western Nepal are a little known Nepalese ethnic group. They belong to one of the several Tibetan-speaking communities in the Himalayan belt who are known in the Nepalese language as Bhotyas,¹ a term reflecting their cultural affinities with the Tibetan people. The study of this group's economy and social organization shows that the Humli-Khyampas are a relatively recent group with genealogies which only go back six generations. Because of this short span of time, the older generation of the Humli-Khyampas retains knowledge of their ancestors who acted as "founders." This situation is somewhat unique: the starting point of the Humli-Khyampa ethnic group is recent and verifiable in contrast to that of many other ethnic groups whose beginnings are putative or a matter of legend. This article attempts a historical reconstruction of the Humli-Khyampas through informants' accounts and explores some of the interlocking cultural and economic factors which were involved in the formation of the Humli-Khyampas as a distinct ethnic group. The study is restricted to the empirical problem of the Humli-Khyampas' ethnogenesis -- my term for the emergence and formation of a new ethnic group -- and does not specify broader theoretical implications about ethnogenesis in general.

Introduction

As the label "ethnic group" is open to various interpretations, the sense in which it is used here should be clarified. Barth (1969: 10) summarizes what is generally understood by ethnic group in anthropological literature, saying that an ethnic group:

1. is largely biologically self-perpetuating,
2. shares fundamental cultural values, realized in overt unity in cultural forms,
3. makes up a field of communication and interaction,
4. has a membership which identifies itself, and is identified by others, as constituting a category distinguishable from other categories of the same order.

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Barth states that although this is an ideal type of definition, it is sufficiently close to many empirical ethnographic situations to be of use. This also holds for the Humli-Khyampas. Barth's criticism (1969:11) of the above definition, however, is not that it misrepresents ethnic groups as such but that it implies that ethnic groups develop in social separation from other groups and that this blurs our understanding of ethnic groups in their broader social context. As shall be shown here, the formation of the Humli-Khyampa ethnic group is a case in point -- this group emerged not in relative isolation but within an embracing social system.

Barth emphasizes point 4 of the above definition: From a group's self-ascription and self-identification, it follows that other groups are distinguished as "outsiders", i.e. the group defines itself vis-à-vis other groups. Barth (1969:15) then suggests that it is the social "boundaries" which are of essential importance in defining an ethnic group and that the group's continuity depends on the maintenance of these boundaries. As shall be discussed later, I suggest that these social boundaries are also effective for the formation of a new group.

The term "ethnic group" as used here further designates a social unit in contrast to an "ethnic category" as an abstract concept. Cohen (1969:4) makes this useful distinction pointing out that

"... an ethnic category often becomes an ethnic group, as a result of increasing interaction and communication between its members."

A group need not include all members of the category from which they are drawn, and any particular ethnic category might actually consist of several ethnic groups. The term "Tibetan" for example, refers to an ethnic category of individuals, geographically ranging from western China over the Autonomous Region of Tibet to the Himalayan areas of Bhutan, Sikkim, Nepal and India which includes many distinct ethnic groups. As for the Humli-Khyampas, they belong to the ethnic category of Tibetans and they have, under specific historical circumstances, formed an ethnic group.

In order to describe and analyze the emergence of this ethnic group, the word "Khyampa" is first explained and for reasons of political identity, attention is drawn to the important fact that this term should not be confused with the ethnic group of the "Khampas". The "Khyampas" from far western Nepal are Nepalese citizens totally different in origin from the "Khampas" originating from eastern Tibet. This discussion, which should clarify both terms for anthropological as well as for common use, is followed by a short outline of the Humli-Khyampas' economic activities as nomadic traders. Later I relate the Khyampas' own stories about

their origin. From these some factors emerge which I suggest were necessary preconditions for the formation of this new group: specifically, economic and politico-juridical constraints forced individuals to leave their native homelands. The conditions under which these people of one ethnic category formed an ethnic group are then considered. For this purpose, three factors -- the ecological niche of trading, intra-cultural identification, unification under politico-juridical leadership -- will be analyzed. For broader perspective, it is mentioned that the Humli-Khyampas are not the only "Khyampas", but that there exist other groups of Khyampas throughout the region of the Himalayas. Finally I describe the present day economic problems of the Humli-Khyampas which are likely to initiate a process of transformation of the current stage of their social and economic adaptations.

Khyampas and Nomadism

When speaking quickly, the Humli-Khyampas pronounce the word "Khyampa" as "Khampa" or "Khamba", with /p/ and /b/ in free variation and the /y/ unarticulated. This slight difference in pronunciation has resulted in various spellings and has led to a confusion in distinguishing between two very different ethnic groups: the Khyampas from western Nepal and the Khampas from southeastern Tibet. To help clarify the source of this misunderstanding, it is necessary to explain the origin of the two words.

The term Khampa refers to a people whose origin lies in a specific part of Tibet. Kham is the southeastern region of the Autonomous Region of Tibet in China. In the Tibetan language, a noun designating a person may be constructed by adding the syllable /pa/ to the root. Therefore, Kham with /pa/ becomes Khampa which denotes men and women living in and coming from Kham. These people are the Khampa, famous as Tibetan guerrillas who fought against the Chinese before and after the war of 1959.

The term Khyampa, however, refers to quite a different group. Jaeschke (1968:59) translates the substantive 'khyampa'³ as "strayed, lost, wandering, vagrant", and the verb 'khyam' as "to run about, to wander". The Khyampa themselves interpret the term Khyampa as people who have no house, those who wander and migrate as opposed to settled people. The consonant /y/ can only be distinctly heard in the pronunciation of the word "Khyammag", a short form of "Khyampa nagpo", the literal translation of which is "black vagrant", a term used for insults only.

There are several different Khyampa groups -- seven in far western Nepal, three of which are subgroups of the Humli-Khyampas -- and each distinguishes itself by adding names of geographical locations or "origins". The Group I studied call themselves Humli-

Khyampas, Humli being the Tibetan genitive (which coincides with the Nepalese adjective) of Humla, the northwesternmost district in Nepal. Humla is also the place, of all their wanderings, where the Khyampas say they feel most at ease.

The fact that the Khyampas and the Khampas are two distinct ethnic groups is, and should be, explicitly stressed here. Until the present time, this distinction had not been drawn and consequently, some crucial political implications that bear on ethnic identities in Nepal have followed. The Khyampas are Nepalese citizens whereas the Khampas are today either political refugees or have become Chinese.

Fuerer-Haimendorf mentions "Khambas" (his spelling, but he is actually referring to Khyampas) in his book on Himalayan traders:

"As long as there was an open frontier between Nepal and Tibet, many Tibetans, described by the Sherpas by the generic term Khamba, came to Khumbu and stayed for some years or settled for good" (1975:42).

"An ethnic group of equally ambiguous character are the Dangali Khambas. ... In the vicinity of Jumla and of Gum there are other groups of Khambas. ... The origin of these groups is still as problematic as is that of the Dangali Khambas, but there is nothing to suggest that they have any connection with the inhabitants of the Tibetan province of Kham ..." (1975:285).

He states that as a rule no distinction is made between different types of "Khambas", this blanket term being applied to anyone who either came from Tibet or is descended in the male line from such immigrants. Because of the often slurred pronunciation, it may have escaped Fuerer-Haimendorf that the term Khyampa is derived from the verb 'khyam', to wander around. Khyampa then seems to be a general term used for migrants within the area of Tibetan languages.⁴

In a footnote in his book on Dolpo, Jest (1975:255) refers to the "khams-pa" (his spelling of the term Khyampa) as people living with the Thakali or the Sherpa, or as autonomous groups living in the high mountains in summer and near the Indian border in winter. A general survey of Nepalese Khyampas is given by Rai (1973:64-67) who describes the different "Khamba" groups (his spelling) and their economic activities. He claims that the Khyampas do not know their history and never tell others about it. However, I became interested in trying to find out who the Khyampas are and where they came from.

Among the Khyampa groups Rai mentions, I chose to live with the Humli-Khyampas since their way of living and pattern of trade seemed to be least influenced by recent economic and political developments.

Up to this day, the Humli-Khyampas have remained nomadic traders who barter Tibetan and Indian salt for rice with Nepali hill farmers. They move through the valleys of the Buriganga and Kurna Rivers and their tributaries in the districts of Achham and Bajura in far western Nepal. Rai (1973:64) uses the term "semi-nomad" for the Humli-Khyampas in order to draw the following distinction:

"... They (the Humli-Khyampas) are called semi-nomadic because, unlike the Rautes, a nomadic tribe of the food gathering stage, they change the places of their habitation during summer and winter for the purposes of trade."

Rai claims that a distinction should be made between nomads who change their habitats for food gathering purposes and nomads who change their habitats for trading purposes. As almost all nomads, including the Rautes,⁵ exchange products and are traders to a greater or lesser extent, the adjunct "semi" would seem to be a misnomer. Rather than creating a category "half-nomads", the implications of which are imprecise and unclear. I will refer to the Humli-Khyampas as commercial nomads or alternatively nomadic traders for the following reasons: They move in a yearly fixed cycle over the geographically wide area from Purang (also known as Taklakot) in western Tibet (Himalayas) to Dhangadi in Nepal's Tarai (Gangetic plain) using about 30 camp-sites one way. The whole group wanders together, usually scattered in small groupings of a few households. They live in tents and carry all their material belongings with them, thus sharing some basic traits with pastoral nomads. But in contrast to pastoral nomads, the Humli-Khyampas do not consume their animal products themselves, nor do they exchange them for agricultural products. Rather, the Humli-Khyampas raise their flocks of sheep and goats for use as packanimals carrying the salt-and-rice-bags. The sheep and goats' milk is used exclusively for nourishing the young animals, never for human consumption. As the animals are needed for transport, their meat is only rarely eaten, following religious sacrifices or when an animal dies from sickness or by accident.

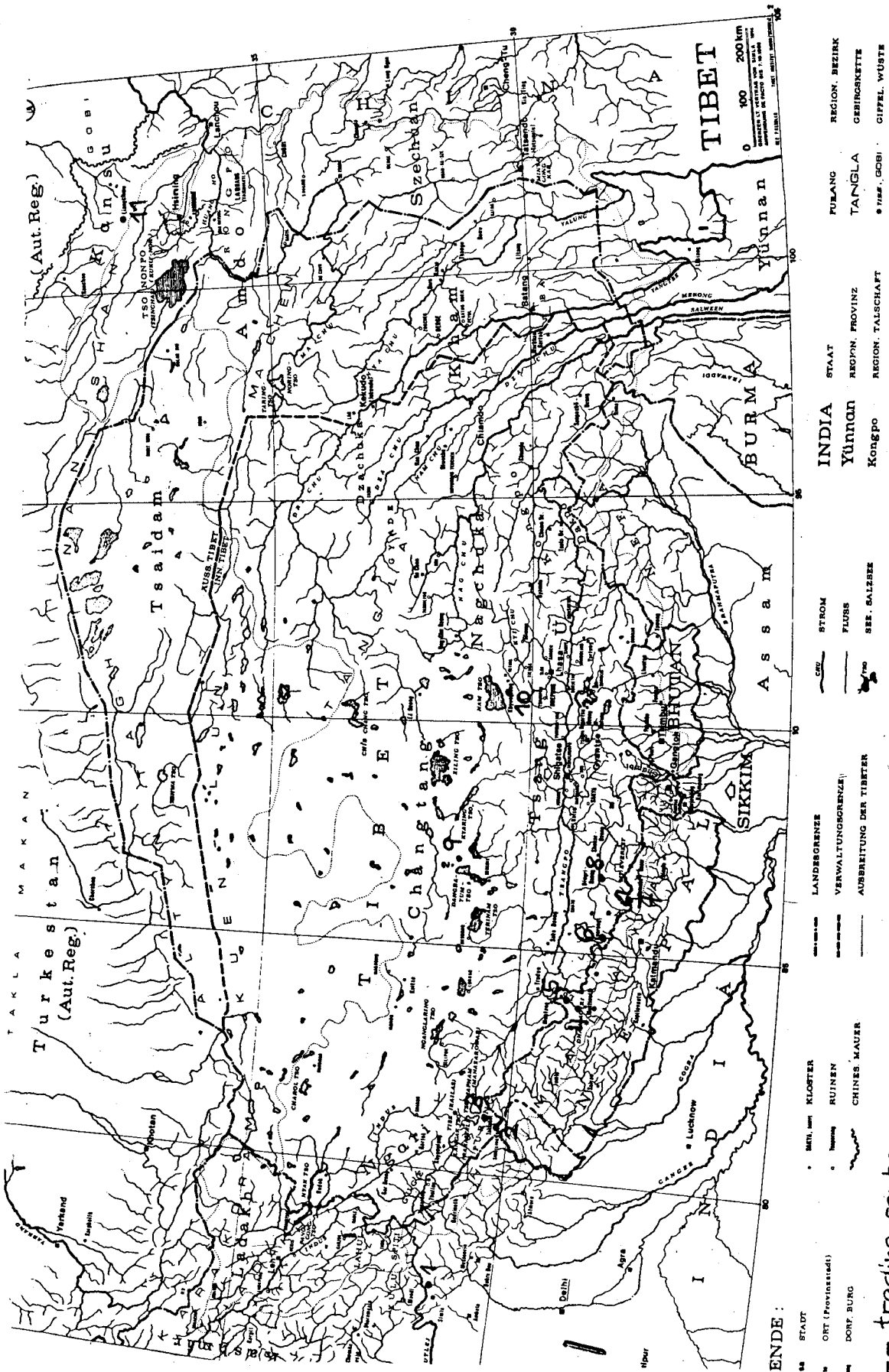
The Humli-Khyampas gain their living from trade, that is the barter of salt for rice. They have little other means of subsistence than to trade along their long-established routes. About half of the Khyampa households till some fields at the border of the jungle in northern Bajura. Only the worst fields are given to them by the villagers on a tax-paying basis. The crop of the fields is merely a small additional income and none of the families can live on it.

The Humli-Khyampas, when asked about their history, answer that they left their history with their forefathers. But who are their forefathers? The answer to this question can be found while listening to people narrating historical anecdotes. The Khyampas usually refer to each other by kinship terms, but when telling amusing or historical stories, the name of a person is mentioned either together with a nick-name, or, in some cases, with names such as Nubri, Kyirong, Dingri, Hite or Khunu (i.e. Khunu Samten, see below). These are place-names including the names of different valleys in Tibet and the Himalayas ranging from central Nepal to western Tibet and northern India (see map). The various clans use these place-names to distinguish one clan from another with each one proud to refer to an ancestor who came from one of these valleys.⁶ For example, two clans trace their origin back to Thak Khola and call themselves Thapa,⁷ which they explain as people from Thak Khola. They point to the relative similarity of the syllables Thak/Tha, and add the syllable /pa/ to make it into a noun: people from Thak with the /k/ left unpronounced. Two other clans, the Baro and the Khyungpa, come from Mustang. But in many cases, the place of origin cannot be so easily identified as in the case of the above mentioned familiar valleys like Kyirong, Dingri, Thak Khola or Mustang.

More difficulties arise in tracing the origin of the clan of Hor and the several of Sher. For the Hor, various interpretations are possible: They might have come from the nomadic tribes of Mongolian stock in Hor (Kansu), a region in northern Amdo (China). Or possibly they are descended from the Mongolian soldiers who fought in Lhasa in 1717 after the death of the Dalai Lama VI. According to a personal communication,⁸ these soldiers later withdrew to the valley of 'damzhung' south of Nam Tso in Nagchuka, where they remained known as Horpa. Still another tribe of Horpa, said to be different from the two mentioned so far, lives in Changthang. On the map in Jest's book (1975:163), Hor is indicated as a region north of Mugu, approx. 30° lat., 82° long... Tibetans living in Switzerland⁹ told me that Hor is a Drokpa camp near Barka in the vicinity of Lake Manasarowar, a designation I found confirmed by Landor's map (1900:annex).

The Horpa Humli-Khyampa immigrants seem more likely to have originated from this latter area than from Kansu or Nagchuka considering the geographical closeness of this place to the area where they are nowadays wandering and trading.

Sher-Khyampa is a collective term, and all those clans who come from any valley situated eastwards from the Humli-Khyampas' trading areas (e.g. from the regions of Pokhara, Solu and Khumbu),



call themselves Sher-Khyampas. Also the Thapa (mentioned above) from Thak Khola belong to the Sher-Khyampas. Most of these clans, however, while they say they are Sher-Khyampas, cannot give a precise indication as to where they originated.

One of the larger clans is said to be from Shago (also pronounced as Shawag or Sha-o), a place in India not yet identified, but possibly a valley south of a pass leading from Gyanyima (western Tibet) to India.⁹

Ideas about where these clans actually came from must remain tentative. It is either possible that the above mentioned places may be the actual points of origin or else they were merely places where migrating people remained for one or more generations before they moved onwards to become Humli-Khyampas.

From the attempt to investigate Humli-Khyampa places of origin, two important issues emerge: 1) that the several clans refer now-a-days to these place-names as their places of origin and use them as distinctive labels, and 2) that wanderings over geographically wide areas and over time have apparently taken place.

Why then did some people leave their valley in the past? A few examples may help to give an answer. From the many stories collected, three are summarized here:

- K's FFFF held a government post which he had inherited from his elder brother when the latter died. He seemed to be incapable to manage the job since he got involved into severe fights and consequently had to leave the valley with his family.
- K. left the valley at the age of 19 after his father's death. He left with his mother and sister. They were very poor and in search of better living conditions. When he joined the Humli-Khyampas after several years of wandering, he was a poor man who had to begin trading with root-medicine, not with salt and rice as is usually the case, because he had neither sheep nor goats as pack-animals. He then borrowed money and probably worked about as successfully as he does nowadays. With a flock of 400 sheep and goats, he belongs now to the well-to-do Khyampas.
- About ten years ago, some farmers from a village in Humla were caught by the police while killing musk-deer. They were severely punished and due to the heavy fines, they had to sell all their land, houses and jewellery. With the few animals they had kept,

they joined the Khyampas and subsequently became nomadic traders.

These stories give us a clue as to possible factors behind some people's migration from their villages:

1. Economic constraint

Poor ecological conditions may force a farming household to look for other possibilities to secure food. Besides agricultural and pastoral work, trading is a necessary source of income for all Himalayan people to make up for the perpetual deficiency in the harvests. It is well-known that in an expanding market herders and traders can quickly become rich, if their animals produce sufficient offspring. This opportunity is denied to farmers whose crop yields are somewhat limited by the size of their plots of land. This might have been an incentive for poor farmers to abandon non-rewarding agricultural labour. Two Khyampa households, who joined the group only a few years ago, explained that they had left their homes after having repeatedly observed the Humli-Khyampas wander through their village, and having thought to themselves how much easier the nomadic way of life would be. They accordingly gave up their hereditary rights to their land and their status as settled villagers to become commercial nomads.¹⁰ Whether this information is complete or whether there are other more deep-seated reasons behind their out-migration must remain for the moment an open question.

2. Politico-juridical circumstances

People who were living in conflict with the dominant political system, i.e. those who could not pay taxes or became outlaws, might have left their homes to escape official punishment and/or the villagers' sanctions.

There might be cases where one or the other factor predominantly determined emigration but it is equally possible that both factors often worked interdependently.

Another issue is, when did these people leave their valleys and how old are their stories? The oldest genealogies reach back six generations, and the following historical account, told by the Khyampas themselves, gives the first evidence as to when and with which households or clans, the Humli-Khyampa group was born.

Khunu Samten, the most famous Khyampa, lived about 1855 a.d. He had killed an enemy and was therefore imprisoned in Doti, the official court in western Nepal during the Rana period. While in prison, he daily recited his Tibetan prayers and worshipped his gods. At that time, Nepal sought to expand its territory and the Gurkha

army was then conducting a war in Tibet (Rose 1971:114). While Khunu Samten was in prison, the official court in Doti received a letter written in Tibetan. Before the 1855 war began, letters between the involved governments were exchanged to announce places and purposes of battles.¹¹ The letter received in Doti seems to have had such a function in the Tibetan-Nepalese war, with the official court of Doti representing the Nepalese Government in far western Nepal. When the Tibetan letter arrived at the court and the Nepali officials could not understand Tibetan, they asked Khunu Samten to translate the letter for them. Subsequently, he was hired as their interpreter and went as a go-between with the Gurkha-army to western Tibet. Nepal won the war and Khunu Samten received merits for the political support he gave to the Nepalese Government. He was awarded distinctions such as a hat¹² and a letter, both symbols of officials status during the Rana period. The letter, for which Khunu Samten had apparently asked the local authorities, is said to have designated him as the leader (mgoba) over some of the migrant individuals or households that were the founding members of a small and motely group. In that letter only six households, all of different origin, were mentioned, namely: a household each from Khunu, Mustang, Thak Khola, Dingri and two others whose origin has been forgotten as the letter was lost (probably it was the clans of Nubri and Kyirong according to the earliest marriages in the genealogies). These six households represent the first generation of the Humli-Khyampas. For them, the hat and the letter symbolize the official beginning of their own ethnic group and Khunu Samten, regarded as an outstanding personality, acted as their first officially recognized leader (see Page 25).

In the time of Khunu Samten, the number of households grew from six to twelve. They now proudly refer to these with the saying 'khyampa bzhi-gsum-bchu-gnyi' which means "Khyampa four times three are twelve." This saying is mostly used in internal law-cases where it is emphasized that the unity of the group plays the major role and the individual a subordinate one.

The six founding households also represent the six oldest clans. These have meanwhile increased to fifteen. The oldest clans enjoy the most prestige and are today, even if not prosperous, the recognized social elite. The crucial distinguishing feature between the elite and the lower strata is the possession of a pedigree of five to six generations versus three or less. The pedigree charters the position of the clan members in the community and justifies their respective claims to status within three broad categories: established, about-to-be established, and new-comers.

Over the last 125 years, many new immigrants joined the group which nowadays numbers 170 households which, given an average of six persons a household, corresponds to a population of approximately

1000 people. The Humli-Khyampas are today a distinct small ethnic group who speak their own western Tibetan dialect. They express their identity through overt characteristics such as dress and jewellery, and covert characteristics such as values according to which standards of morality have been established and performance is judged (Barth 1970:14). The Khyampas marry endogamously and have their own internal laws and regulations. They distinguish themselves as a unit from their Hindu neighbours and think of themselves as innately superior. This internal sense of superiority is expressed alongside their outward attempts to emulate Hindu society as shall be discussed later.

The question arises as to how, within a few generations, an ethnic group can emerge out of different single households originating from various valleys in the Himalayas. Three interlocking factors seem to me to be of crucial importance for generating the formation of this group, namely a favourable ecological niche, intra-cultural identification and unification through politico-juridical leadership. I will elaborate these three points and show how they bear on the emergence of a unitary sense of identity amongst the Humli-Khyampas.

1. Ecological Niche

From time immemorial, salt and grain had been traded between the Nepalese middle-ranges, which are also known as "the hills" of Nepal and Tibet. Tibet had large stocks of salt from the salt-lakes in the northern plains but suffered from a lack of grain due to its high altitude. Nepal, on the other hand, did not possess its own salt deposits but had (in times past) a surplus of grain in the hills. To understand the ecological niche the Humli-Khyampas were able to occupy, it is important to note that Tibetan salt had had a virtual monopoly throughout the Nepalese middle-ranges for many centuries. Lack of communication between the hills and the Tarai, which covers the northernmost Gangetic plain, and the dread of malaria in the Tarai kept Indian salt out of this market. Before the partial eradication of malaria from the Tarai about 20 years ago, no salt had been imported from India and therefore the whole area of the middle-ranges had been supplied exclusively with Tibetan salt. Today this monopoly has been broken and the situation is different, but we are concerned here with the conditions of about 130 years ago.

From Fuerer-Haimendorf's detailed treatment (1975) of the trans-Himalayan trade, we learn that all along Nepal's northern border the high altitude dwellers derived their subsistence not only from agriculture and pastoralism, but in part from bartering salt for grain and other commodities. These high altitude dwellers belong to different Bhotya ethnic groups (with the exception of the

Newar) who controlled the trade along the routes running from north to south in the areas where they lived. They held a key position in this barter trade which usually involved several phases, each handled by a separate agent: Tibetan traders, Bhotya traders and hill farmers.

The key position of the Bhotya traders arose from the geographical location of their habitat. The trade entrepôts were established at climatically favourable points where the Tibetans could come with their caravans of yak without exposing themselves and their animals to the unaccustomed heat of the lower regions. In these same high altitude areas, except during the winter months, the climate did not create any hardship for the thinly clad farmers from the middle-ranges. However, the simultaneous arrival of the goods from both directions could not be coordinated, due to the respective climates of the Tibetan highland (in winter the passes are closed) and the Nepalese lowland (during the summer monsoon, the valleys are impassable). The resulting need for storage of goods somewhere at the border of the two geographical and climatic zones led to the use of this economically strategic location. The merchant Bhotya families took advantage of this and established a monopoly over the movement of goods. They acted as middlemen between the Tibetan traders, who delivered the salt to the many markets along the Tibetan/Nepalese border, and the grain-growing farmers from the lower valleys. According to supply and demand, the exchange rates fluctuated considerably and the traders made their profits by manipulating these fluctuations (Fuerer-Haimendorf 1975: 250).

In rough outline, this description applies to all trading communities along the Nepal/Tibet border as late as the Chinese occupation of 1959 (which also corresponded with the importation of Indian salt). However, in the westernmost district of Humla, this basic pattern fails. It is characteristic of the trading economics in Humla that no Bhotya families were able to bring the trade under their control. As a possible reason why, Fuerer-Haimendorf (1975:291) says that the Bhotyas from Humla were lacking mercantile entrepreneurship in comparison to the great Sherpa and Thakali merchants. My own interpretation, however, is that the development of the extensive trade in eastern, central and near western Nepal was in part based on there being large market centers with a surrounding hinterland, a factor which is missing in both far western Nepal and far western Tibet. The trade-marks there were of considerable importance and widely known throughout the region. But these regions, with their scarce populations, represented an economically very different situation from the areas where the major trade arteries ran between the capitals of Kathmandu and Lhasa and their relatively densely populated valleys. Although there may be other factors accounting for this difference, it is important here only

to note that Humla and its bordering southern districts Bajura and Achham offered an unexploited market.

The question remains as to why the Kurna- and Buriganga-valleys, with their tributaries in Bajura and Achham, presented favourable ecological niches for the Humli-Khyampas. As salt is essential for humans and animals, one wonders from where and from whom the farmers had obtained the salt before the Humli-Khyampas became their suppliers. The people from the middle-ranges used to have two ways of meeting their salt requirements: either they went once a year to one of the trade-marts in Humla or they entered into a trade-relationship with one of the Bhotya families who regularly grazed their flock in the southern valleys.

The pattern of trade in Humla may be briefly described as follows: The salt-entrepôt for Humla is Taklakot (Purang) which today lies in the Chinese territory. The Bhotyas from Upper Humla, a region which is not self-supporting in grain, undertake several journeys to Taklakot in summer in order to obtain salt which they exchange for grain (mainly rice), with the Hindus from Lower Humla. This barter takes place solely between individual families and occurs either at a trade-mart in Humla or at lower altitudes in winter, when the Bhotyas from Humla move with their flocks of sheep and goats to the lower regions. This move serves the double purpose of bartering salt for grain (part of which is the shepherds' food in winter, the rest being transported back to the village in spring) and of taking the entire flock to grazing grounds in the warmer southern regions during winter. (For details see Fuerer-Haimendorf 1975:223 passim.)

As the Hindus from Bajura and Achham usually have few or no carrier-sheep and goats or other pack-animals, they rely on the Bhotyas from Humla to deliver salt to them. For the Bhotyas in Humla trading was and still is a necessary additional income. However, despite the favourable market, these Bhotyas did not resort to the salt-rice barter as their main source of income, but continued to depend on agriculture. This market was then exploited by the Humli-Khyampas and they have been successfully trading salt for grain for the past six generations. As only the less important valleys were left to the small-scale Humli-Khyampa traders, they did not and could not develop a trade to the extent as the Bhotyas in eastern and central Nepal, given the isolated location of Humla. However, the specialization on the salt and grain barter provided these migrants with an alternative economic strategy, whatever their former difficulties and reasons for leaving their homelands might have been.

The initiative to form a group may have first been based on mutual economic interest. From elderly Humli-Khyampas we know that both the Khyampa traders and the Hindu village farmers occupied

their separate ecological niches with no competition for resources until about 20 years ago. Their commerce used to be lucrative and there was, with a few exceptions, little interest in settling -- in sharp contrast to the situation of today. The Khyampas enjoy talking about the "good old times" when there was no Indian salt, and grain was still plentiful.¹³ At that time there was enough leisure for lavish feasts but nowadays they shorten all their ceremonies in order to gain time for trading in an effort to keep up their former standard of living.

2. Intra-Cultural Identification

The second factor which seems to have contributed to the formation and unification of the Humli-Khyampa ethnic group is intra-cultural identification. This factor has two complimentary dimensions: first, the common affinity to Tibetan culture, a dimension which I refer to as "kindred spirits", and secondly, this group's explicit differentiation of themselves from Hindu culture, or the "alien spirits".

As mentioned above, the Humli-Khyampas originate from various valleys in the Himalayas. As widely scattered as these places are, and despite regional diversity, the people of these valleys share many basic features of Tibetan cultural traditions. Therefore, the "future" Humli-Khyampas were able to relate to and identify with one another through familiar patterns of institutionalized behaviour and modes of expression. Looking back to the society's beginnings, one might assume that these peoples' affinity resulted from their sense of having a "common fate" as outmigrating traders within a culturally alien milieu. For the purposes of trade, the Khyampas wander for the greater part of the year in Nepal's hilly region alongside Hindu villages, and, therefore, live for long periods in surroundings culturally different from them. Although the Khyampas know the routes, the villages, and their trading partners of the western hills very well, they say that they always feel like foreigners there. They constantly look forward to summers in the Himalayas where they feel at home. They are especially afraid to die in the Nepalese western hills because, they say with conviction, the Hindu spirits there would haunt them after death.

The many cultural features distinguishing the settled Hindus from the nomadic Humli-Khyampas have always restricted interaction between the villagers and these traders. Each group's classification of the other as "strangers" or "outsiders" tends to limit their interaction to the economic sector. For other domains of activity, the Khyampas had to seek interaction with other people, namely those with whom they could share a common set of ideas.

Although the feeling of "kindred spirits" may be regarded as an important factor in Khyampa group formation, this alone was probably not sufficient. Rather, the culturally alien surroundings, the "alien spirits", may have been even more strongly responsible for encouraging the individual households to unite. In effect, the shared Tibetan cultural heritage combined with the shared characteristic as low-status outsiders to settled Hindu society generated conditions favourable to the unification of this group.

These two factors, the "alien" and the "kindred spirits" are interdependent and together help account for the group's solidification. This would support Barth's view (1969:11) that the sharing of a common culture need not be considered as a definitional characteristic of an ethnic group. Applied to the genesis of the Humli-Khyampas, this suggests that their sharing of the common Tibetan culture was not necessarily the only, or even the main, factor behind their group formation. The critical focus for the formation rather becomes the "ethnic boundary" that divides this group from others. As Barth (1963:15) puts it, it is

"... the ethnic boundary that defines a group, not the cultural stuff that it encloses."

The Hindu villagers presented outsiders with "boundaries" which were penetrable only for limited kinds of relationships. Given these boundaries, it may be suggested that the individual Khyampa had to align with one another for their social survival and cultural identity. In this process, they became a distinct ethnic group with their own "boundaries".

These conditions, together with economic interests, are likely responsible for the first marriage which occurred about 125 years ago among the founding households, namely between the families of Khunu and Thak Khola. These households had set up their own nexus of social contact and joint interests from which a network of relationships with reciprocal obligations began. It is this network that formed the very basis for the emergence of this ethnic group and I would argue that it provided the foundation stone for the Humli-Khyampas. As genealogies show, the founding members later incorporated new Khyampa immigrants through marriages which created an increasingly expanding network of relationships and a growing group.

The Khyampas have remained culturally distinct although they have been in intensive contact with the Hindus for the past six generations. Marriages with settled Hindu villagers do not take place and the few cases of elopement are strongly disapproved. Interaction still remains restricted to the economic sphere. Marked differences in behaviour between the Khyampas and the settled

Hindus have persisted. Despite the primary strategy of mutual exclusion, a process of imitation aimed at assimilation towards Hindu values took place within the Humli-Khyampa ethnic group. As for three quarters of their yearly economic cycle they live and wander in the Nepalese hills, the dominant Hindu culture has over the years generated a slight "Hinduization" of the nomadic traders which has been an active force alongside their traditional Tibetan cultural background. I would suggest that these changes towards Hinduization took place in an effort to raise the status of the traders in the eyes of their dominant Hindu customers. Therefore, it became necessary for the "ritually unclean" non-Hindus (the Humli-Khyampas are Buddhists) to shed some of their traditional habits. Yak and beef are no longer eaten and polyandrous marriages have been given up. Only the older Khyampas remember that their grandfathers used to eat yak meat; the young ones deny this all together. The same holds true for polyandrous marriages. The younger generations cannot imagine polyandry and they say it even fills them with disgust to think in former times a wife was shared by several brothers. The Hindus' attitudes in matters of marriage and sex have also induced changes in the behavioural patterns of a Khyampa male towards his younger brothers' wives and vice versa, an alteration which was further sanctioned by adopting the appropriate Nepali in-law kinship terms. Whereas Hinduization is undoubtedly a strong factor for giving up polyandrous marriages, the transformation of once settled villagers into nomads may equally be responsible for the present monogamous marriages. This issue has to be clarified by further studies.

The identification with castes, which has occurred since this generation only, shows that the Khyampas are trying to move into the Hindu social system. Caste placement vests them with a distinct status and makes it possible for the Hindus to identify the Khyampas within their own social categories. The Khyampas' caste names have of course been chosen deliberately and they are used only when communicating with the Hindus, not within their own group. The most frequent (about 90%) caste designation used nowadays is "Gurung." The Khyampas believe that Gurung is a specific rank within an original Hindu caste order and are not aware that it refers to another Tibeto-Burman ethnic group in Nepal.¹⁴

These selective adaptations were made to enhance the Khyampas' status vis-à-vis their Hindu neighbours and they mark a significant change away from the traditional Tibetan pattern.

3. Unification through Politico-Juridical Leadership

A third factor bearing on the formation of this ethnic group is the unifying effect of the emergence of official politico-juridical leadership among the founding households.

After release from prison, Khunu Samten had, according to oral tradition, requested the local court of justice in Doti to vest him with leadership over the founding households of the emerging group. This favour was granted to him on account of his services rendered to the Nepalese Government during the Tibetan-Nepalese war in 1855 (see Page 65). A letter assigned him with leadership functions and he therefore became the first official representative of the Humli-Khyampa ethnic group. Before he was given this official award, there had been much struggling among the few households as to who would take over the group's leadership and it may have been because of this struggle that Khunu Samten was put into prison since some informants say that he had killed his chief rival. However, it does not seem likely that this was the reason for his imprisonment, because the Khyampas did not and still do not take their internal disputes before the jurisdiction of the official Nepalese law-courts. Other informants maintain that he had killed a Nepali villager, which would indeed account for his imprisonment. Whatever the reason, the fact remains that, because of his talents and ambitions, he received an official award and used it to legitimize his leadership. Presumably, this award brought him so much prestige that his role as a leader was no longer questioned.

The written document Khunu Samten had requested was the kind of letter any Nepali village-headman called mukhiya needed for recognition by the Government. The granting of such letters was an established tradition and the letter to Khunu Samten was therefore a mere extension of official practice. Khunu Samten was thus assigned the functions of a mukhiya over the emerging group (the Khyampas' own term for mukhiya is mgoba) analogous to a mukhiya over a village unit. Creating this leadership meant that the founding households had the same rights and duties as any village and that they had become officially recognized and legitimized as a distinct self-regulating politico-juridical unit within Nepalese society. However, this letter did not vest them with the right to settle down as villagers, and accordingly they cannot at present form a Panchayat¹⁵ of their own -- their main concern nowadays. According to the Khyampas' oral tradition, this letter designated them as migrating traders; thus the establishment of an ascribed status as commercial nomads became complete and irrevocable for this group.

The assumption of leadership demanded personal capabilities such as diplomacy, mediation skills and eloquence in public orations expressed in wit and jokes -- all traits which are said to have been outstanding characteristics of Khunu Samten. He managed to initiate a tradition of Khyampa leadership, which was to be inherited patrilineally. The history of leadership during the past six generations shows, however, that the leader's position could be transferred from one family to another within one clan or, in one instance, from one clan to another, if the official patrilineal successor should be lacking in the qualities considered necessary for a leader.

The Humli-Khyampas in Broader Perspective

I have tried to demonstrate two crucial factors underlying nomadization of once sedentary Himalayan villagers and three factors behind the formation of the Humli-Khyampas into an autonomous ethnic group.

Certain economic and politico-juridical constraints were necessary though not sufficient preconditions for the emergence of this group. I argue that it was the ecological niche of trade in western Nepal which encouraged the Humli-Khyampas to form a cooperating trading group. In the formation of the Humli-Khyampas' ethnic group, I suggested that intra-cultural identification played a further role as a critical factor and that the rise of the politico-juridical leadership had an additional unifying effect.

The Humli-Khyampas are by no means the only people who are called and who call themselves "Khyampa." In order to understand the social category "Khyampa", not only must the Humli-Khyampa in far western Nepal be considered but a wider frame of reference has to be drawn. There are a few other Khyampa groups living in western Nepal who have little interaction with each other and no overall political organization.¹⁶ Other Khyampa groups live in the Indian Himalayas.¹⁷ However, no ethnographic material on any of these groups, whether in Nepal or in India, is available for comparison.

Moreover, being a "Khyampa" does not necessarily entail that one belongs to any of the above mentioned groups. In other geographical regions of Nepal -- that is, in western, central and eastern Nepal -- there are two other types of Khyampas. These have not formed autonomous groups but are individual Khyampa families who remained Tibetan citizens or who have settled and integrated with other ethnic groups. The two types are discussed below:

1) In Tibet, prior to the Chinese occupation, one kind of traders used to be called rgya-'khyam-pa (henceforth referred to as rgya-Khyampas). This term refers to individual trading families who travelled to India (rgya-dkar) to buy foreign goods. These were later sold in the big Tibetan markets, or door-to-door with the traders wandering from one village to the other. Jest (1975: 255) writes that

"le terme de rgya khams-pa désigne dans le Nord du Nepal les tibétains qui se sont fixés dans les hautes vallées himalayennes. Une partie de la population tibétaine est extrêmement mobile; les tibétains - sont-ils d'une strate inférieure (?) - se déplacent volontiers, allant en pèlerinage en Inde ou dans l'Ouest du Tibet au Mont Kailās, Dans

leurs déplacements ils vivent d'aumônes ou d'un peu de commerce."

The reason for this mobility is that the rgya-Khyampas had left their houses and lands to their families and used to return only once a year to their native villages to pay the head-tax to their landlords. These petty traders may be regarded as entrepreneurs who operated as single family units with neither economic nor political ties with other units. They provided the Tibetan market with goods which were not produced locally and which were in constant demand. This offered the traders a more promising income than that derived from agriculture and also freed them from the corvée taxes. Although as rgya-Khyampas these petty traders were looked down upon, they enjoyed far more freedom than they had before as serfs or small farmers in Tibetan villages.¹⁸

The only evidence of rgya-Khyampas in the literature suggests that they used to trade in Thak Khola where they also seem to have partly attached themselves to the Thakali (Jest 1975:255):

"En pays Thak, à Jomosom et à Tukucha, ils sont membres de la société Thakali; ils ne peuvent cependant épouser de femmes Thakali. Ne possédant pas de terre, ils vivent essentiellement du commerce avec le Tibet: sel, laine et produits manufacturés en Inde; ils font partie du système des clients Thakali, ce qui explique l'admission dans leur société."

2) As mentioned earlier (see Page 60), Fuerer-Haimendorf alludes to "Khamba" (his spelling) in Sherpa society. He describes them as recent immigrants who settled down in Solu and Khumbu (1964:28 passim):

"... The avowed intention of most of these immigrants was to find work, and if possible a new home, in one of the Sherpa villages. Many Tibetan families succeeded in this aim, and the numerous first, second and third generation Khambas in villages such as Khumjung and Kunde are evidence of the continuity of this process of gradual infiltration."

It may be concluded that the Khyampas who attached themselves to either the Thakali or the Sherpa (both groups belong to the ethnic category of the Tibetans) became part of these societies at their lowest strata:

"... Khamba is a relatively empty category in local terminology. ... Lacking the most important status symbols of the Sherpa, i.e. an acknowledged clan name, these Khamba were looked upon as socially inferior" (Oppitz 1974:235).

I would argue that the "Khamba" Fuerer-Haimendorf and Oppitz refer to and the "rgya-khams-pa" Jest mentions, as well as the Khyampas who constitute the Humli-Khyampa ethnic group, all emerged out of the same social process: outmigration of once settled people belonging to the ethnic category of Tibetans. They represent a category of people who, under economic or politico-juridical constraints had left their homelands. This was a reiterative process that most probably has been going on for many generations, at least six as the genealogies among the Humli-Khyampas show and four among the Khyampas in Sherpa society (Oppitz 1974:235; for literature on recent settlers in the Nepalese Himalayas see also Sacherer 1977; in the Tibetan Himalayas, Aziz 1977).

The various Khyampas met different economic/ecological conditions according to the geographical region to which they migrated. For the Humli-Khyampas these conditions were such that they could develop their trade, form a cooperative unit and an ethnic group of their own in the remote valleys of western Nepal.

Nowadays the ecological niche upon which the Humli-Khyampas had built their economic existence is slowly disappearing. In spite of this, the trend towards nomadization still continues to some extent. This is due to the increasing population pressure on the dwindling resources in the Himalayas so that trading or outmigration becomes more and more compulsory for the villagers since as yet there is no monetary labour market. This trend, however, seems to be limited to people from the northern regions in western Nepal, as all the newcomers in the Humli-Khyampa ethnic group have come exclusively from these areas during the last few years.

With the roadbuilding and setting-up of government salthouses in the middle-ranges, the traditional salt- and grain-bartering will come to a standstill as has happened in other regions in Nepal. The other Khyampa groups have already settled during the past ten to fifteen years and today, the Humli-Khyampas, together with the Belkhet- and the Duli-Saipal-Khyampas, are the last nomadic traders.¹⁹

The social and economic dynamics of the Humli-Khyampa ethnic group does not end here but is an ongoing process. Whether they will resort to other goods for trade in the future and remain "Khyampas" or whether they will settle as traders, farmers or wage-labourers is difficult to foretell. Transitions are already underway and a greater participation in the nation's development efforts is being sought.

Only time will tell to what extent the Khyampas will retain their ethnic unity as they adapt themselves to new institutions and economic changes in modern Nepal.

Notes

1. Bhot refers to the geographical area of Tibetan culture and the syllable /ya/ designates people who are from Bhot.
2. The material presented here is based on field research I carried out while living with the Humli-Khyampas following their economic cycle as nomadic traders over one full year from 1976 to 1977. I would like to express my appreciation to CNAS of Tribhuvan University in Kathmandu, and to the Swiss National Fund for supporting my research and to my interpreter and assistant, T.B. Lama, who helped me to solve the language problems. Special thanks are due to Bihari K. Shrestha for critical comments on earlier drafts and Dr. Linda Stone for her invaluable editorial assistance.
3. 'Stands for the unpronounced vowel 'ŋ'.
4. I would also like to point out the expression "Dangali Khamba" Fuerer-Haimendorf (1975:270, 285) uses. I have never heard this Nepalese-Tibetan compound of "Dangali Khamba" which is a pleonasm. In the western Nepalese dialect, "Dangali" means exactly the same as the Tibetan term "Khyampa", namely wandering people who are not settled. "Dangali" is used in a derogatory sense by the Nepalese-speaking people from Humla when referring to the Khyampas. Whether "Dangali" has any connection with the district of Dang in southwestern Nepal has not yet been investigated.
5. The Rautes used to exchange hand-made wooden bowls for salt with the Humli-Khyampas.
6. I use the term clan although the different patrilineal lineages of a clan cannot name their common ancestor. They are aware of their common descent and refer to each other by saying that they are of the same rus (bone).
7. The Humli-Khyampas do not know of the existence of the Thapa subcaste of the Chhetri (Kshatriya) caste in Nepal.
8. Ngawary Thondup Narkyid, Michigan University, Michigan, USA. Shakabpa (1967:104) mentions these people as Sogde (Mongolian community).
9. Namdak and Tendzin Yumdung, Horgen, Switzerland. Drokpa is the Tibetan term for nomads.

10. The land belongs to their families (polyandric) with whom they are still in contact but do not enjoy usufruct of the land any longer.
11. Personal communication from T.B. Lama, Kathmandu.
12. Hats were status symbols and their different shapes and colours made it possible to distinguish between the official ranks of ministers and other high- and low-government employees.
13. Since Indian salt is imported and government salt-houses have been put in the Tarai, the farmers of the southern middle-ranges are able to provide themselves with salt. The Humli-Khyampas have therefore lost their ecological niche and face today a tough competition.
14. In modern Nepalese context, however, the name of the ethnic group -- i.e. Gurung, Tamang, Magar, etc. -- is used as a caste designation.
15. Panchayat is a political organization on village-level recognized by the Government.
16. Mandara-, Chaurikot-, Dandakhet-, Belkhet-, Duli-Saipal-, Raskot-, Mahendranagarh-Khyampas. The latter three groups have split off from the Humli-Khyampas.
17. Tangchen-, Niti-, Shawag- or Shago-Khyampas.
18. Personal communication by Champa Porong, Zurich, Switzerland.
19. Another group of traders in far western Nepal are the Byanshi. They also deal in salt and grain with Taklakot. Their trade however does not affect Humla, Bajura and Achham but Darchula, Baitadi and Dandeldhura in Mahakali Zone. Also, in contrast to the Humli-Khyampas, they have permanent homes and an own Panchayat (Manzardo 1976:85).

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An Ethnohistorical Study of Bandipur

Linda L. Iltis*

Introduction

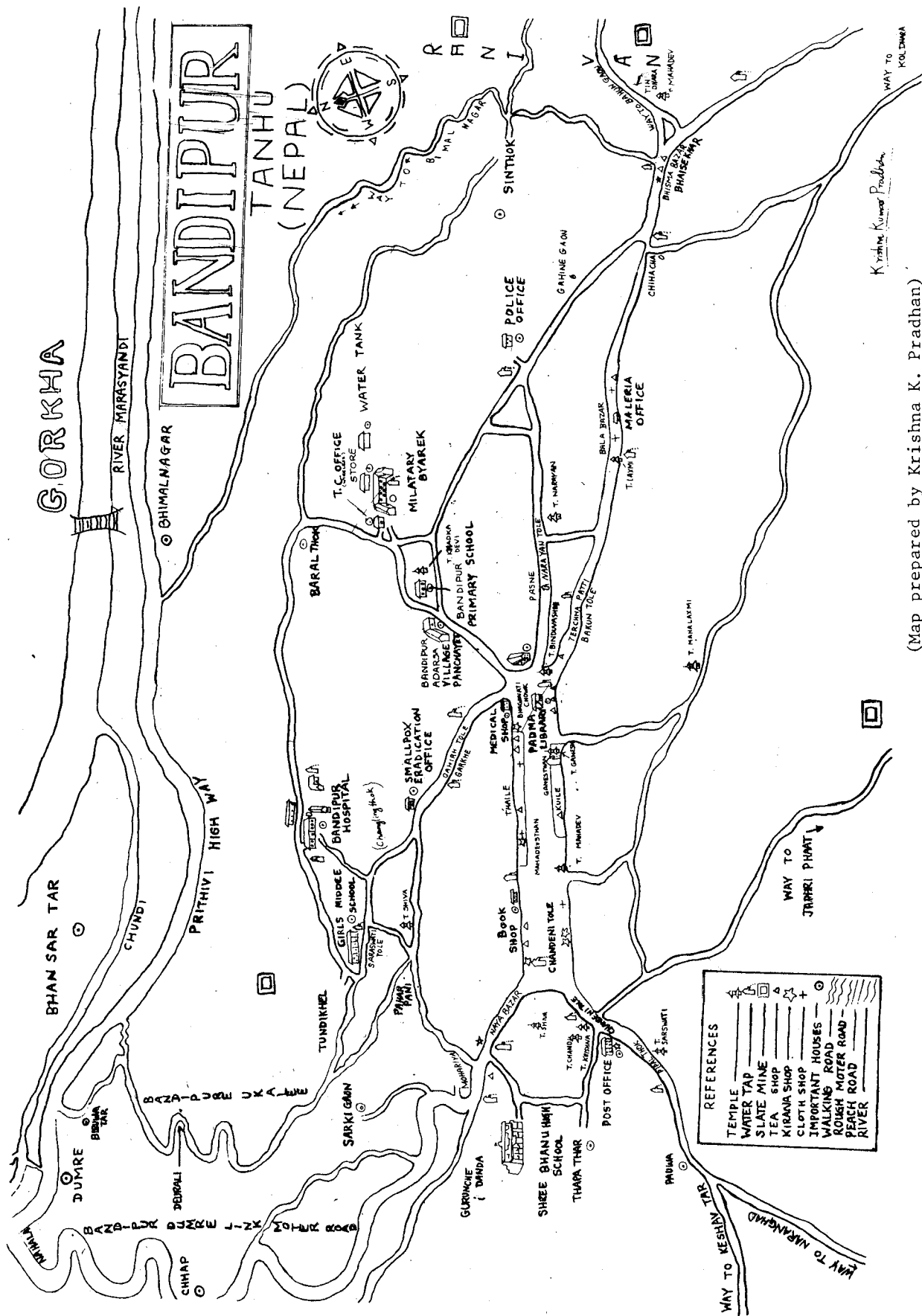
The Newar trade industry in central Nepal is changing with new geographical and political conditions. This paper concerning a Newar bazaar community proceeds from a consideration of the history of the development of a trade network and cultural center to a description of the general economy and life-styles resulting from this development. It concludes with a description of the decline of the center due to a change in trade patterns, and current adaptations aimed at revitalization of the community.

Bandipur Bazaar is located in the district of Tanahū in the southeastern corner of Gandaki Zone. It is situated south of the Prithvi Rājmarg Highway midway between Kathmandu and Pokhara, near the point where the Marsyangdi River takes a sharp turn eastward on its way to join the Trisuli River at Mugling. Along the highway at this bend in the river is the bus stop bazaar town, Dumre. At the entrance of town a footroad track takes off from the road up a slopping ridge on wide stone staircases to the top. The top of the ridge slopes gently south and then forms a saddle. The track widens and gradually enters onto a long slate-paved bazaar with brick town houses on either side. This is the main bazaar of Bandipur.

I. HISTORY OF THE BANDIPUR AREA, PRE-1800

It is useful to reconstruct and visualize how and when the Bandipur area was first settled, who were the first inhabitants, and what were their long-lasting contributions to this community during its first stages of development. A number of valuable sources of information are available for piecing together the early history of the Bandipur area prior to its identification as a significant cultural and trading center. These include the local legends and spoken history passed on from one generation to the next; the physical artifacts connected with these spoken legends (e.g., shrines, architecture, and festivals); and several accounts written by early Western travellers, which often correspond directly to the local legends. These sources, when examined together, seem to support each other in providing a fairly consistent account of the political, religious, and economic situation of the area during early periods of its history.

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(Map prepared by Krishna K. Pradhan)

Krishna Kumar Pradhan

Legends

During my stay in Bandipur, I found the single most popular topic of conversation of my informants was discussion of what Bandipur was like in the past. There was no end to the countless reminiscent stories and heroic tales which the people were able to recount to me. I observed that these legends, in conjunction with related physical evidence, suggested a rich historical base from which the culture of this area today has, in part, evolved. The two-part legend which follows is one of the most informative. It seems to incorporate not only an explanation for the origin of a particular Devta (Hindu God), but also a broad, all-encompassing explanation for local traditions -- and perhaps even an insight into how the people themselves view their existence in the greater scheme of things.

THE LEGEND OF MUKUNDA SEN RĀJA OF PALPA, OWNER OF THE SACRED SWORD

Part A

Many years ago, Mukunda Sen, Rāja of Pālpa, gained control over all the surrounding areas [including Bandipur, which at that time was inhabited by Magars and some Kāmis], and became ruler over many types of people. He had unified many under one throne, yet his accomplishments were not satisfactory. He felt something lacking, and longed for spiritual strength. He decided to go away from his palace and stayed in a shelter on the Mutschuk Dānda (hill) above Bandipur. One night, having shed his finery, he disguised his identity, dressed simply, and wandered out from this place to a small Brahman settlement not far away called Jhapri Phānt. Here an old woman (Brahman) took him in. She offered him rice and a place to spend the night. The meal included some 84 varieties of curry, milk, yoghurt, and pickle. But when Makunda Sen received them, he mixed all the curries together and ate everything combined. The old woman sadly looked on and commented, "You are just like Makunda Sen Rāja. Just as you have taken all these unique foods, each with its own character and flavour, and have combined them all so that no taste is different from the other and all the unique flavours are lost, so Makunda Sen has taken people of many life-styles and combined them under one throne to lose their unique identities. Makunda Sen and you should learn to enjoy each thing separately as it is."

Makunda Sen was so moved by these words that he decided to give up his kingdom for good and become a religious devotee (sādhu). He left his material wealth behind and went to Devghat, where he built a temple, and later died. It is said that he went into a stone² which had been brought up from the Narayani in a fish net just before he died.

Among the material possessions left behind with the woman in Jhapri Phānt was a sword. This old woman had locked away in a room in case the owner returned for it. After many years, the home began experiencing bad omens. Animals died, brothers fought, and the harvest was poor. Finally a Jhānkri (Shaman) was summoned to determine the causes of the ill fortune. The Jhānkri asked if there were any objects in the house which were foreign. The old woman, suddenly remembering the sword, unlocked the door where the sword was kept. In the corner the sword was standing on end, trembling and shaking of its own accord. The Jhānkri knew the sword was a Devta -- no doubt dangerous -- and ordered it to be removed at once. It was later placed on a hill in Bandipur in a specially constructed temple. This powerful Devta is called Khadga Devi. Once a year, from the first day (Ghatasthapana) to the tenth day (Tika) of the festival of Dasain, a series of special worships takes place. On the seventh day (Phulpati) a sheep must be sacrificed between the two sons of the old woman, and a tug-of-war contest determines who keeps the mutton for the feast.

Part B

The Tanahū Rāja (Descendant of Makunda Sen)

The Rāja of Tanahū was extremely brave and cunning. He held his dominion longer than most contemporaries. He was particularly successful in defeating Prithvi Narayan Shah of Gorkha, in battles held on the tops of the cliffs in Bandipur. However, one time they agreed to have a battle along the banks of the river Marsyangdi at which no swords could be used. Prithvi Narayan Shah carefully hid his swords under the sand. The Tanahū Rāja, however, came unarmed, as was the agreed plan. For some time the battle raged on, with the Tanahū armies nearly crushing the Gorkha troops. Suddenly just as the Gorkhalis were about to lose, Prithvi ordered his men to dig up the swords and surround the Tanahū Rāja and his army. The Tanahū Rāja, in his anger toward the deceitful Prithvi Narayan Shah, vowed never again to look on the face of Prithvi Narayan. He went away to Devghat and faced away from Tanahū and Gorkha, and died.³

Physical Correlates of Legendary History

Physical correlates of details in these legends still exist in Bandipur today. In deciphering the legends bit by bit, and in applying them to what physical evidence exists in Bandipur, one can see that the legends appear to be quite accurate in their establishment of the historical setting during their respective times.

There is evidence indicating that Magars had settled in the Bandipur area long before the Newars. Most of the surrounding hills are occupied by Magars or Gurungs, and have approximately the same altitude, soil, and vegetation types as Bandipur. Thus, it is reasonable that Bandipur would be as likely a place to live as the neighbouring hills. The land itself in and around Bandipur shows signs of long occupancy. Terracing is well settled and appears on almost every piece of available land. Much of this land is now overgrown. About forty years ago, there were at least five Magar settlements on the hillsides surrounding Bandipur. Today, only two settlements are still occupied. The other three settlements have disappeared almost entirely. One abandoned site was at a later time converted into a brick factory (Figures 1 and 2).

Above Bandipur on the top of a small mountain, in the middle of an uninhabited forest, there is a small shrine containing twelve swords, numerous bells and tridents, and a brass Nepali flag (Pataka) with an inscription:⁴

"In the year 1919 (1862 A.D.) Chaitra 8,
Friday, to Siddha Makunda Sen, in this
place of love, I offer one Pataka."

Sayen Dhoj (Bhandari)
Chhetri

Near the shrine are several overhanging rock shelters, said to be the hideout of Makunda Sen after leaving his palace (Figure 2 and Figure 3). This shrine, worshipped mostly by Magars, is called Makunda Swari.

In Bandipur, the temple of Khadga Devi is still present, having been rebuilt; and still contains the Sacred Sword, believed to be a representation of Durga (fierce Hindu goddess). The sword is worshipped once a year during the festival of Dasain. The Pujari (priest) for this Puja (worship), a Magar, is one of only two people who may touch the sword. A Brahman priest officiates at the ceremonies with the Magar Pujari, but does not touch the sword (Figure 4b). After chicken and goat sacrifices are completed, the Magar brings the sword out of the temple (Figure 5). People say the sword is easily angered. Once outside the temple, the Magar Pujari gives the sword to a Kāmi Khadge (metal-worker-caste sword-bearer) who becomes the sword bearer for the long procession down through the bazaar. The Kāmi Khadge takes the Devta first to its Maiti⁵ (Figure 6 - also shown behind temple in Figure 4c) so that people of his caste and others may worship without causing pollution in the temple. The traditional sheep sacrifice occurs at the joining of two side streets into the main bazaar (noted on Figure 1 map). The Brahman family said to have descended from the woman who originally had Makunda Sen's sword has now split; one son's

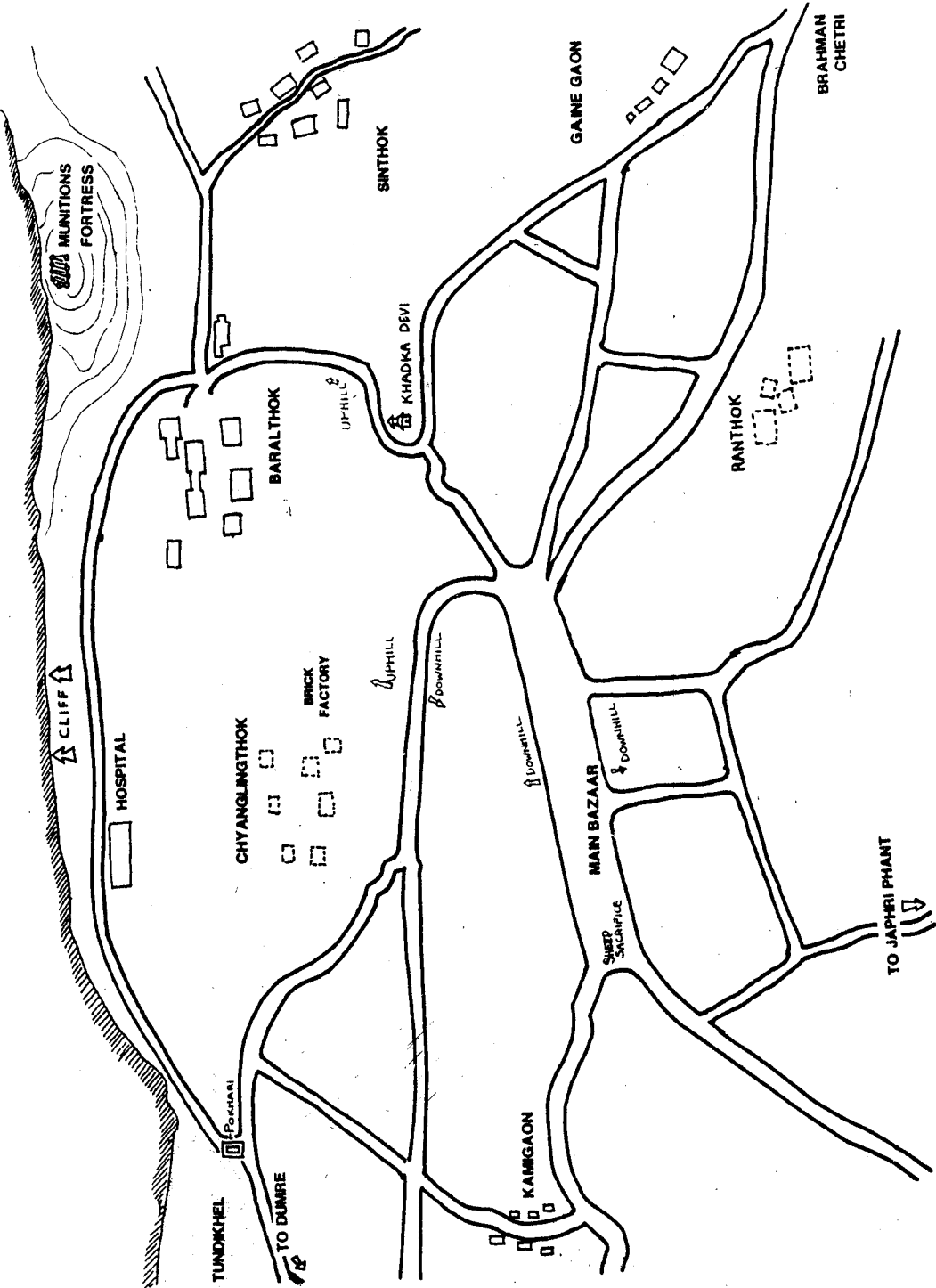


Fig. 1. Locations of original Magar settlements in relation to bazaar today.
Baralthok and Sinthok are the only active settlements remaining today.
(Map prepared by author)

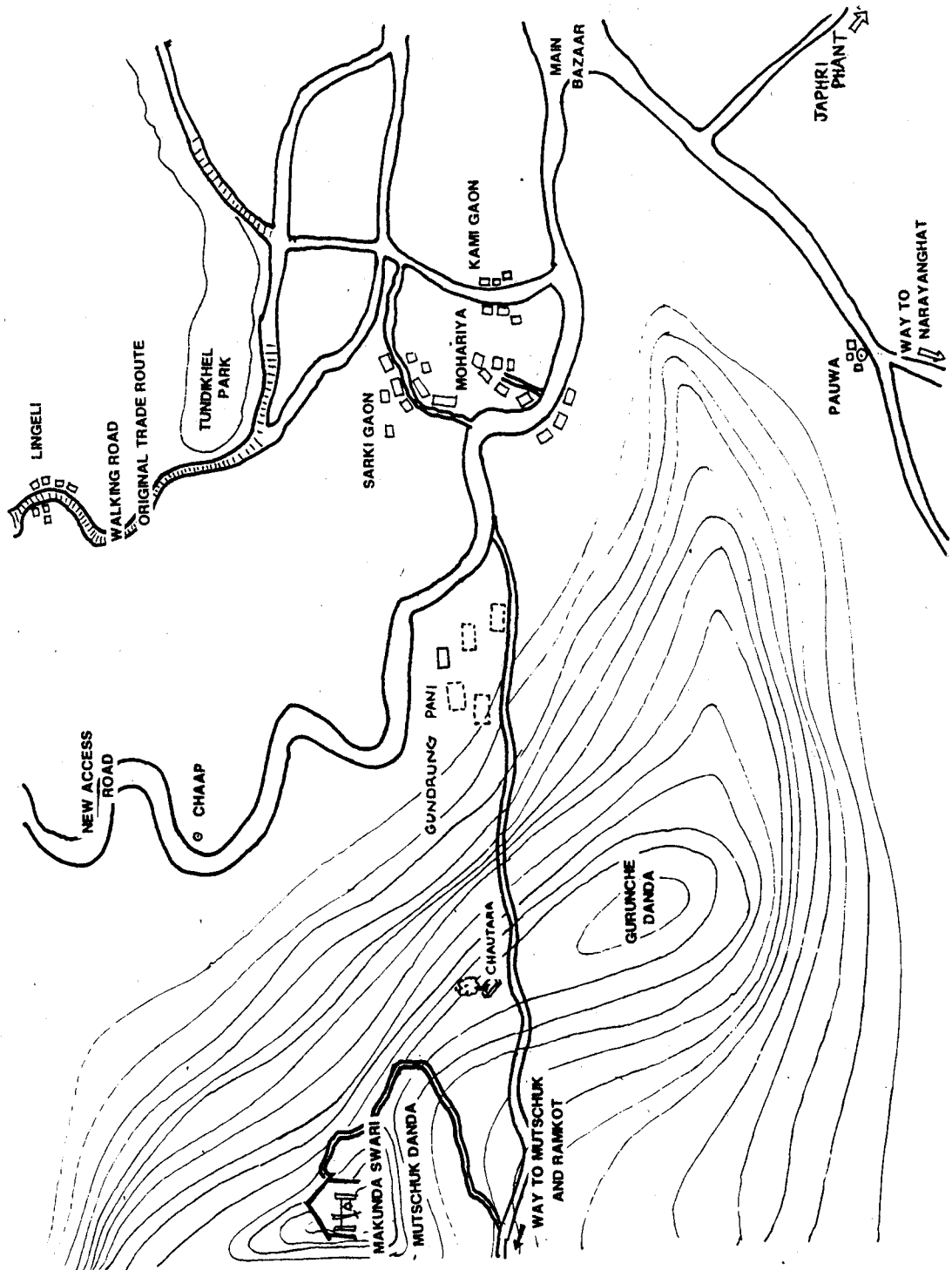


Fig. 2. Extension of Figure 1, this shows three other settlements one of which is almost abandoned. Both maps show the historic locations (Map prepared by author)

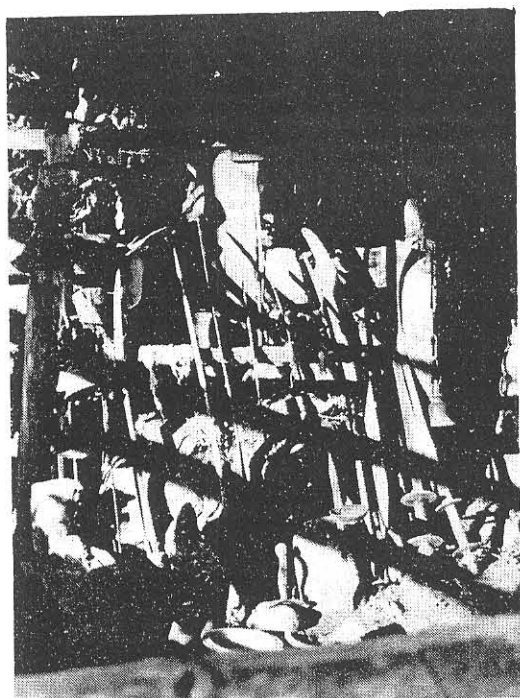
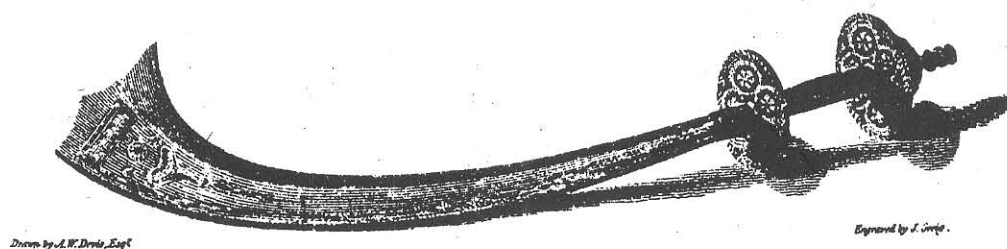


Fig. 3a. Swords in the shrined of Makunda Swari.
(All photographs by author)



Fig. 3b. Marker above shrine.



Drawn by A.W. Doyle, Esq.

Engraved by J. Smith.

The Khora?

Published by William Whitely, Edinburgh, Street, James & Co. of Perth.

Fig. 3c. Engraving of 'The Khora' identical to swords at far right in Fig. 3a above.
(from Kirkpatrick 1811: facing page 118)

Figure 3. Makunda Swari shrine.

descendants live in Jhapri Phānt, while the other son's descendants live in Rāmkot. This place where the sacrifice occurs is almost half way between the two villages, and marks the crossroads.

At the southern tip of the Tanahũ District, the boundary is determined by the confluence of two major rivers of the region. The Seti Gandaki and the Kali Gandaki converge and become the Narayani River, at which point there is a sacred Hindu pilgrimage called Devghāt (Figure 7a). On the Tanahũ side of the rivers are numerous shrines and temples, including the Makunda Sen Chakravarti (from Skt. Chakravartin = "wheel turning" universal king) Mandir (temple) which contains a large, black-oval-shaped rock approximately 3 feet long and 1½ feet high (Figure 7b). The people claim this rock is the very one entered by Makunda Sen, and that it has been growing ever since that time.

The legend of Tanahũ Rāja is also supported by the existence of the ruins of his munitions fortress above the cliff overlooking the Marsyangdi Valley (Figure 1 & 8). These physical correlates serve to support the legend of Makunda Sen and illustrate the importance that legend still holds in the lives of the Bandipur people today.

Written Correlates of Legendary History

There is also some written evidence supporting the validity of the legends of Makunda Sen and Tanahũ Rāja. Two explorers, Francis (Buchanan), Hamilton (1819) and Colonel Kirkpatrick (1811), have written extensively about this time period as they viewed it first hand. Two other accounts written by Christian missionaries add much to a description of the setting at this time.⁶

According to Hamilton's observations about the turn of the eighteenth century, the populations of both Pālpa and Tanahũ were predominantly Magar and Brahman.

When the colony from Chitaur first took possession of Palpa, it belonged to a Magar Chief, and the people were of that tribe. Brahmans, ... are now the most numerous class; next to these are the Khas, and the Magars.

The mountains of Tanahung were inhabited by the same races as Palpa, and nearly the same proportions.

(Hamilton 1819: 178, 183).

Fig. 4. Khadga Devi.



Fig. 4a. Magar Pujari, (left) performs Puja.

Fig. 4b. Pujari prepares goat sacrifice.
Brahman stands at left with shirt.

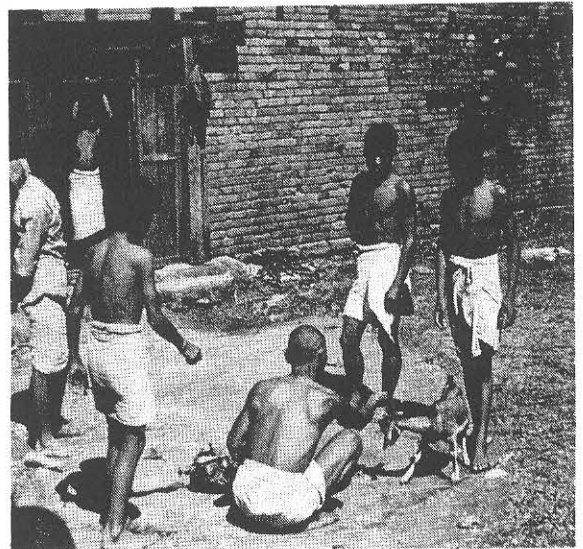


Fig. 4c. General view of Khadga Devi temple,
and chicken sacrifice during Dasain.

Khadga Devi.

(left) performs



Fig. 5a. Magar Pujari brings sword from temple.

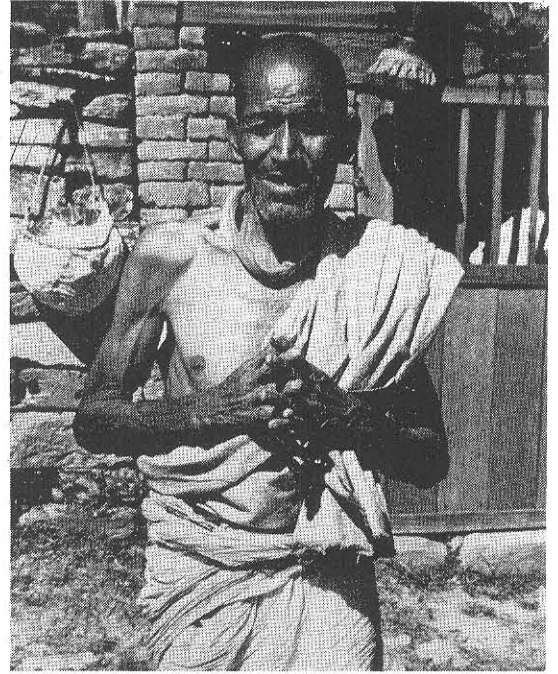


Fig. 5b. Kāmi sword bearer. (Khadge)



Devi temple,
during Dasain.

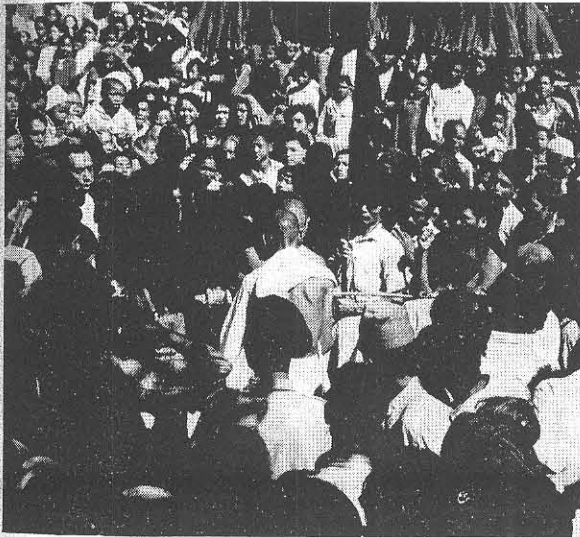


Fig. 5c. Pujari gives sword to Kāmi.

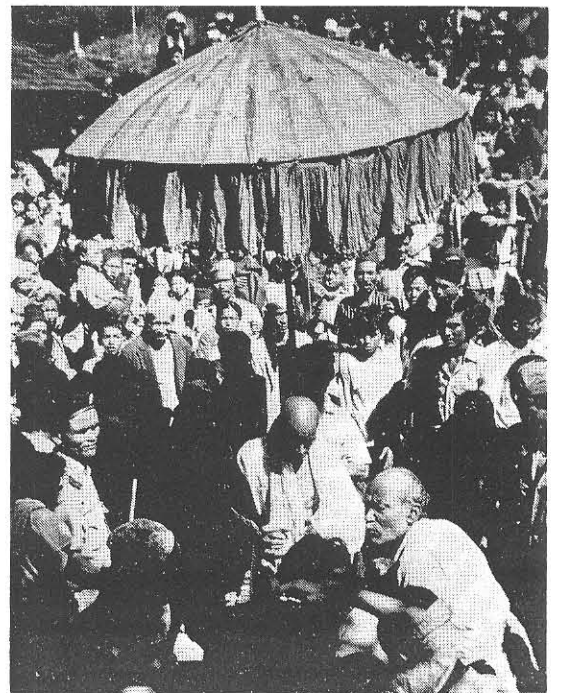


Fig. 5d. Kāmi carries sword in procession thru bazaar.

Fig. 5. Khadga Devi Devta Procession.

Fig. 6. Maiti for Khadga Devi.

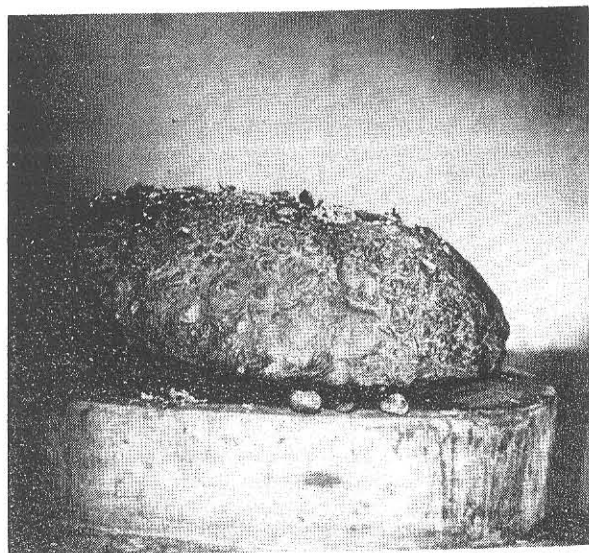


Fig. 7. Devghāt.



Fig. 7a. Ferry at Devghāt crossing the Seti Gandaki to the temple.

Fig. 7b. Makunda Sen Cakravarti mandir, containing the sacred rock.



The Chitaur family, however, seems to have been of Thakuri status (relatively high class). The Pālpa Rāja and the Tanahū Rāja both are descendants of the Chitaur family, with the class name "Sen" (Turner 1931).

... Rudra (Sen) was probably the first of the family, as his descendants alleged, who assumed the title of the Palpa Raja. It is agreed by all that the Makanda Sen, the son of Rudra, possessed very extensive dominions, and might probably have founded a kingdom equal to that which the Gorkhalese now enjoy, but he had the imbecility to divide his estates among his four sons. ... According to what I heard in Puraniya, Manik, the eldest son obtained Palpa, Bhiringu received Tanahung, ...

(Hamilton 1819: 131)

Hamilton continues with a detailed description of "Makanda Sen" and his descendants (p. 170-71), which I have presented in the form of a chart showing the patrilineal descent (Figure 9). Note that the above quote mentions Makanda Sen (Makunda Sen) and the division of his kingdom four ways, while the Legend of Makunda Sen (p. 3 above) states that Makunda Sen gave up his kingdom and went to Devghat as a religious devotee. Thus, what the legend sees as a religious renunciation, in the best tradition of the Hindu Dharmarāja, the British colonial author sees as "imbecility." The following mention of Makunda Sen by B.D. Sanwal also conforms to this part of the legend.

Makunda Sena escapes in garb of Sanyasi.

(Sanwal 1965: 35)

Hamilton's account (p. 185) mentions Makunda Sen's death at Devghāt.

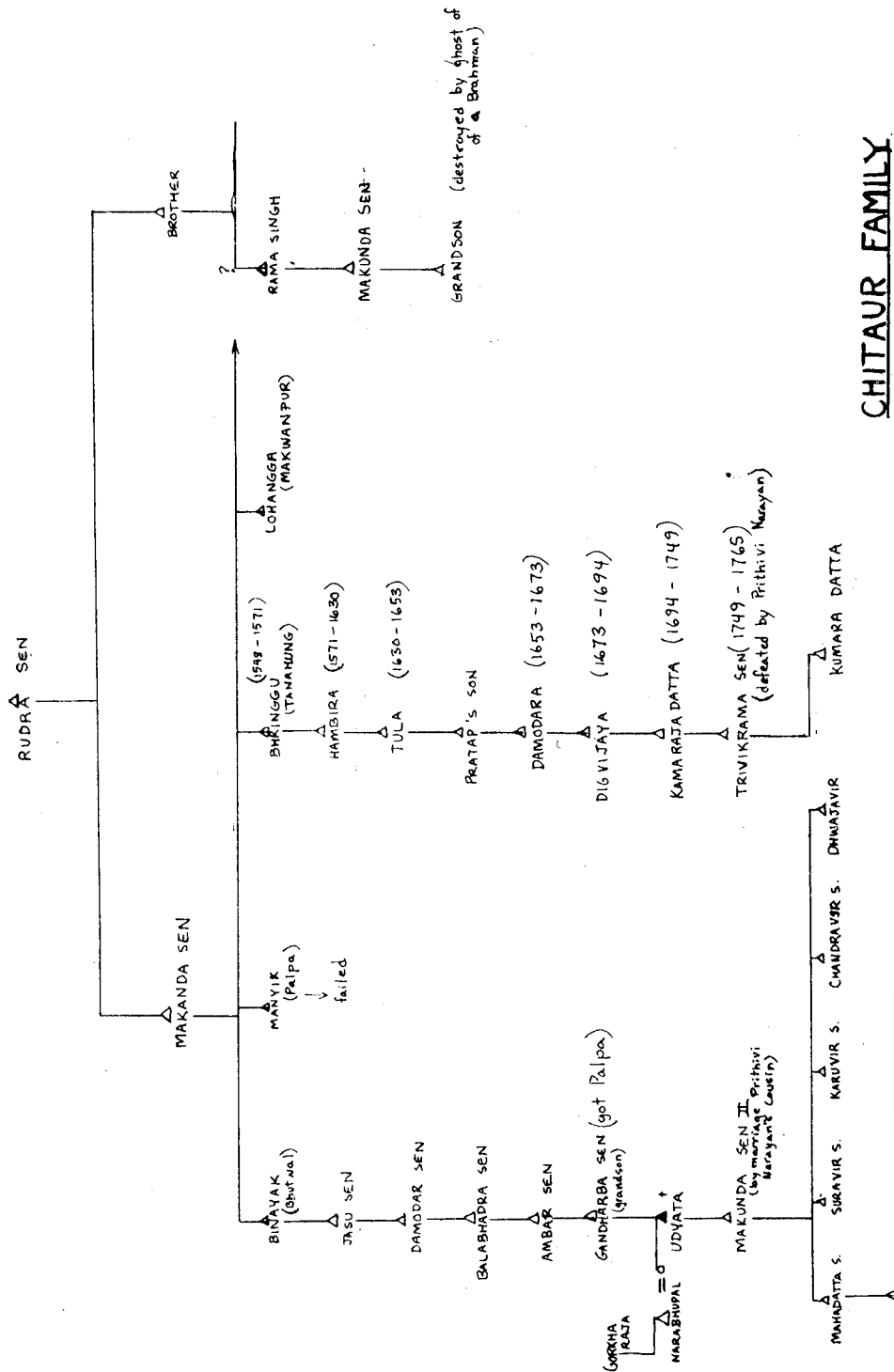
Rising (place name) seems to have belonged to his ancestor Makunda Sen the 1st, who founded at the Dewghat, in that territory, a celebrated temple, where he died.

This corresponds quite closely with Makunda Sen's founding of Makunda Sen Chakravarti Mandir in the legend, and is further evidence that he was, perhaps, indeed a religious devotee. Although these accounts written over 150 years ago must also have relied to a large extent on oral tradition, they nevertheless correspond quite closely to the spoken legend of Makunda Sen as found in Bandipur today.



Fig. 8. View from fortress of Tanah Rāja.

Fig. 8. View from fortress of Tanahū Rāja.

Fig. 9. Chart showing Chitaur family patrilineal descent.
(compiled by author from data in Hamilton 1819; and D.R. Regmi. 1961)

The legend of the Tanahũ Rāja is also well supported by written accounts, both Nepali and Western. Hamilton states that:

No chief resisted with such gallantry and effect the rising power of Prithvi Narayan of Gorkha as the Raja of Tanahung, by whom the forces of that perfidious prince were defeated in a most decisive battle; nor was any attempt afterwards made to extend the dominions of Gorkha to the west until the Raja of Palpa was gained. ...

(Hamilton 1819: 182)

This is in direct agreement with the legend which stresses the firm holdings of Tanahũ Rāja. Hamilton also mentions that:

The Marchangdi continued to be the boundary (of Gorkha) to the west, as it had been in the time of his ancestors.

(p. 171)

Although there is no mention in these accounts of battles being fought in Bandipur, there are several conflicting accounts of the Tanahũ Rāja's "Last Stand." Hamilton states:

How the overthrow of Tanahung took place I have not learned; but the Raja made his escape to Ramnagar, and retains only what he held of the company.

(p. 182)

Colonel Kirkpatrick states that the son of Prithvi Narayan was responsible for the seizure of Tanahũ.

Singh Pertaub (Prithvi's heir) reigned little more than three years, dying in the year 1776; he had added, however somewhat to the conquests of his father, having among other places of less consequence, seized on the districts of Tunnhoi (Tanahũ), Soomaisee, Jogimarra ... the Raja of Tannhoi, Hurry Koomar Dutt (Hari Kumar Datta), is still in possession of part of his patrimonial inheritance ...

(Kirkpatrick 1811: 272)

However, the account which most strikingly supports the legend is offered by D.R. Regmi. I have chosen to present his account in its entirety, so that it may be compared with the legend itself:

In 1756, he (Prithvi Narayan) deceptively imprisoned the Raja of Tanhou, Trivikram Sen, who had come to meet him at Jyamir Ghat. The circumstances described by the chronicler are as follows. Prithvinarayan felt that although the rulers of Bhatgaon and Tanhou were supposed to be his friends, he could not completely rely on them; rather he feared that in moments of crisis they might harbour a design to harass him. Therefore, he contrived to kidnap them and place them near his camp under surveillance. He had no design to absorb the two states into Gorkha, but if he could hold the persons of the two rulers, he would certainly influence the policy of the administration in Tanhou and Bhatgaon. To this end some trusted men were sent to both the capitols. These men were to say that Prithvinarayan was too eager to meet Ranjeetamall and Trivikram for a very urgent task. One Pandit Gaurisvara who happened to be a common friend of both Tanhou and Gorkha ruling houses was deputed by the conspirators to talk to Trivikram. The latter did know nothing of the scheme to arrest Trivikram. Gaurisvara was a priest of the Tanhou family, and therefore, his advice was accepted. It was suggested that the conference would meet at Jyamir Ghat where the participants would go unarmed. But the Gorkhalis had kept hidden their arms underneath the sand to use the same as the occasion required. So while the Tanhou ruler came in all good faith, they surprised him and attacked his person. His retinue watched helplessly as the Gorkhalis unearthed their weapons, sprang on him with a show of force and made him prisoner. Thus Prithvinarayan was freed from the worries of a surprise attack from that quarter. Therefore he proceeded to grab more lands in the Valley of Nepal, and nearly succeeded to annex in no time at least half the area there and in adjoining hills in the west of it. Trivikram Sen was later released, but he died a broken hearted man.

(D.R. Regmi 1961: 57-8)

Other Historical Factors: Pre-1800

I have thus far dealt mainly with the political aspect of the history of this area - through the point of view of both the people of this area and their legends, and the outsiders who have contributed much to the written knowledge of this topic. Other historical factors such as life-styles, subsistence patterns, and sources of income and trade are less emphasized in the spontaneous spoken history of Bandipur, but are nevertheless important to an understanding of cultural development of the people and the area. I was able to obtain some information on these factors through observation and extensive discussions with the elderly people of Bandipur.

The inhabitants living in and around Bandipur were of different caste origins, i.e. Magar, Brahman, Chhetri, Kāmi, and perhaps some Sarki, and each group was positioned in different settlement clusters (Figure 1 and 2). The homes of these settlements today reflect the gradual change from the original architectural styles and techniques to the present-day Newar architecture. Unaltered older homes of the area are constructed from sticks, poles and small rocks, plastered together with clay, dung, and straw. A thick thatched roof protects the home from heavy rains. These homes (if two levels high) usually have notched tree trunk ladders. Woodwork on the windows and doors usually incorporates a pagoda framing, with lattice work in the center (Figure 10). Animals are kept next to the house and under the veranda. The veranda provides a cool, shady location where crafts and other household chores are done during the hot sunny days. For Magars, these crafts consisted mostly of weaving. Cloth weaving with the throw-shuttle loom was used by many to make cloth for the bulk of their clothing. Most common is the white shawl-size piece worn by the women around the head, and by the men around the waist (Figure 11a and b). Bamboo is also skillfully woven by these people into sturdy baskets (dokos), floor mats, and winnowing trays (nanglos) (Figure 12). Mastery of basketry and construction of nanglos proved sufficiently superior so as to provide an additional means of income for those who sold their products in other small villages nearby.

The main source of subsistence for the people of the eighteenth century and earlier must have been their almost total dependence on their own agriculture and animal husbandry. The Bandipur people say that:

Before the Magars settled in Bandipur, there were many tall trees and lots of wild animals. But while walking through the area some people noticed khorsani plants (red hot peppers) growing in the wild. They thought this must be a

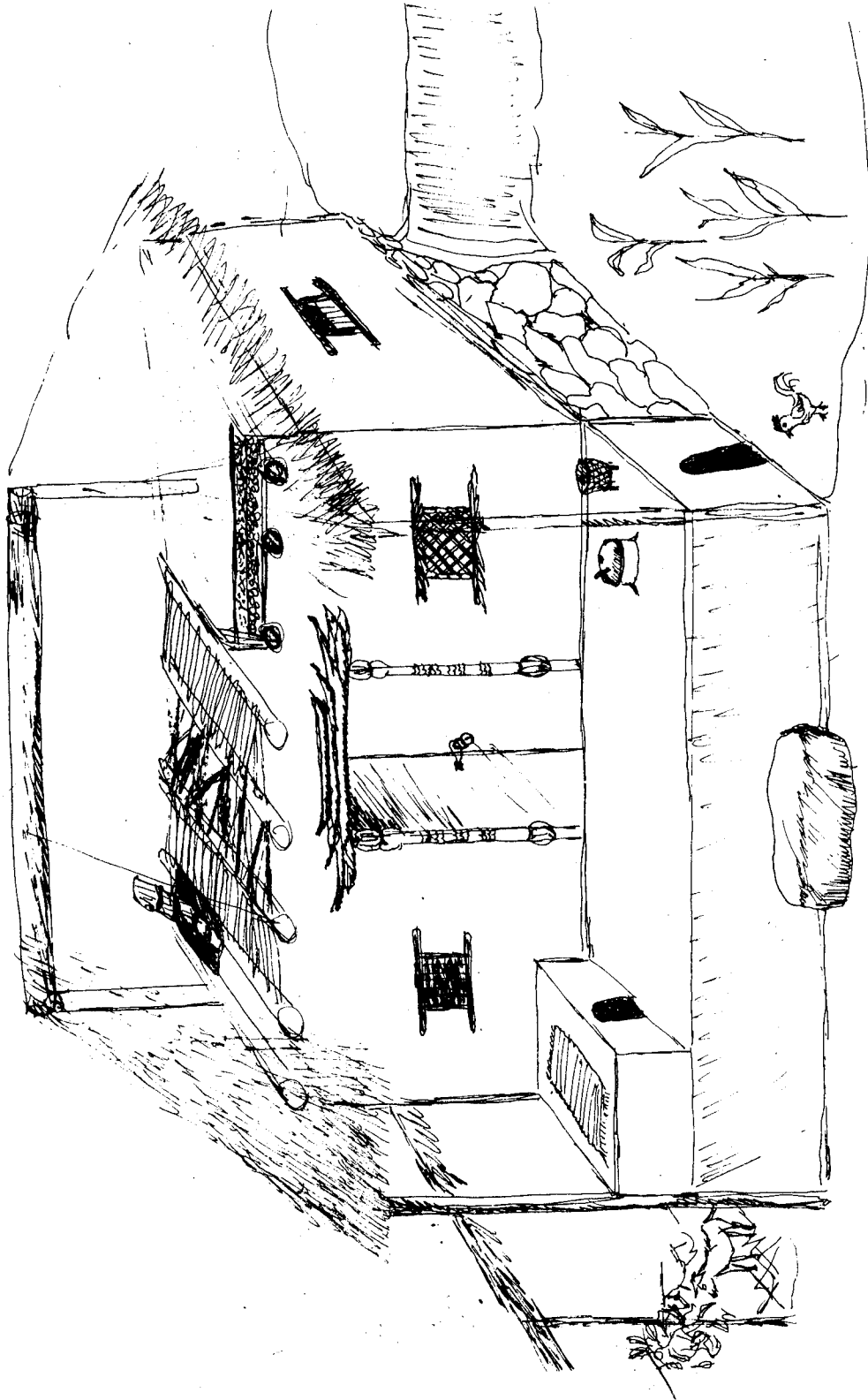


Fig. 10: Illustration of a Magar home, showing construction process, with clay, wood, thatching, and stones. (by author)



Fig. 11a. Hand woven cloth worn by women as a head covering.

Fig. 11b. White hand woven fabric worn around the waist by men.



Fig. 11. Traditional historical clothing worn by Magar and Gurung people near Bandipur.

Fig. 12. Basket and mat weaving.

The Dhoka

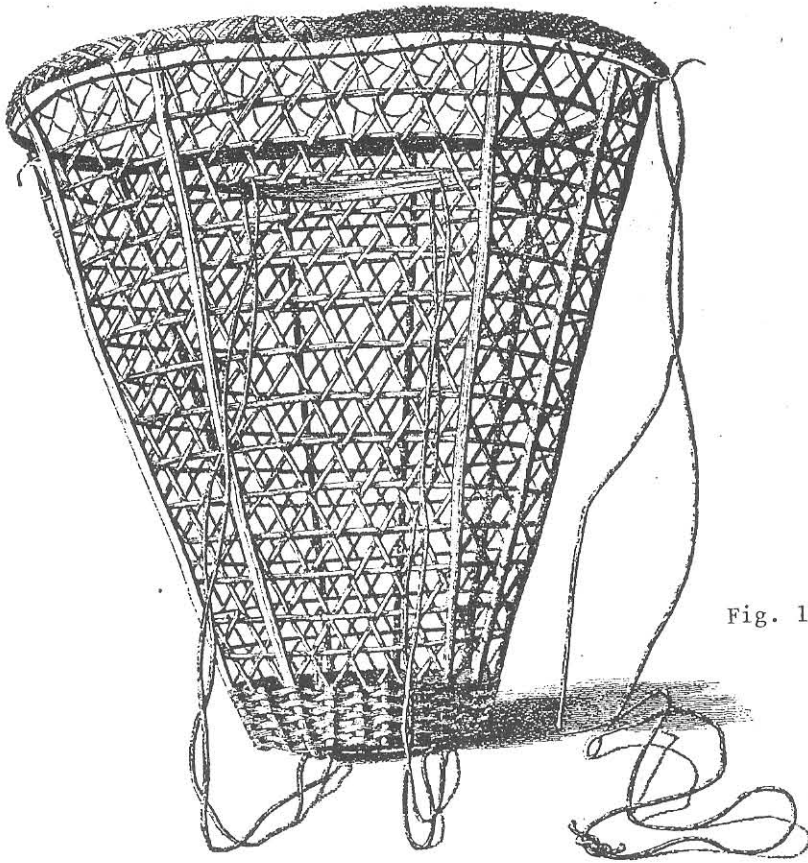


Fig. 12a. Engraving of the Dhoka
from Kirkpatrick - 1811

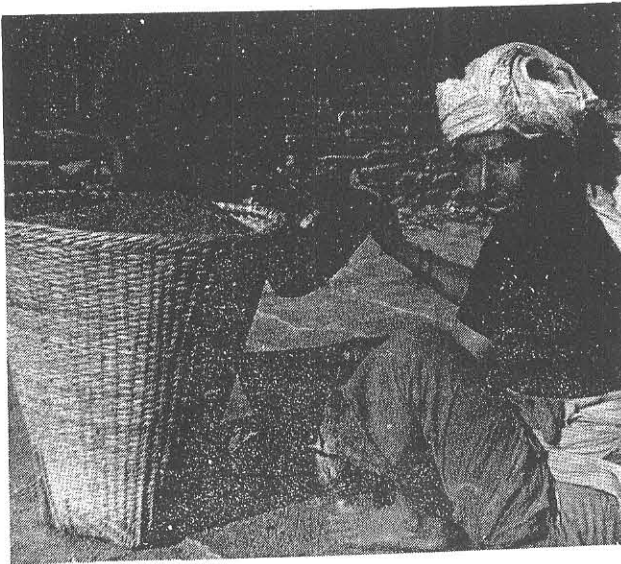


Fig. 12b.

Example of basket weaving in Bandipur,
(thumse-large basket, and dalu-small basket).



Fig. 12c.

Woman weaves a straw mat (gundri)
in Bandipur.

good place for growing domestic plants,
so they settled there.

The land as mentioned before, shows evidence of long usage. There is no doubt that corn, millet, rice, mustard, and sesame can grow well in this area when properly irrigated. The rice always is planted in low lying areas, while corn and millet are planted in the higher fields, along with sesame and mustard. Wooden plows and bulls were used for tilling the fields. Locally crafted metal scythes were used for harvesting. Threshing rice was done by bullocks, and processing of foodgrains was done by hand, with winnowing trays. The foodgrain is often stored unhulled and unground, until it is ready for use; that is, aged a desirable length of time. Rice was milled on a foot-operated Dhiki lever system which, when raised with the foot and let drop, breaks the seed coat off the grains of rice.

The climate is quite mild, with plenty of rainfall which provides at least two crops per year. Although vegetable farming was in some areas difficult due to lack of irrigation, tropical fruit trees grow in profusion and some forest tubers, berries, and nuts could also have supplemented the main diet (If the Brahman woman of the Makunda Sen legend could make 84 kinds of curries, she must have had access to good produce). The altitude and constant cool breezes from the north keep the Bandipur area mosquito-free, even during the monsoon, and hence malaria-free.

There is very little evidence of extensive reliance on trade at this early date, probably due to the relative self-sufficiency of the inhabitants. This is not to say, however, that trade was nonexistent. Peddlers were probably quite common. Potters (Kumals) brought bisque ware for cooking. Lathe-turned wooden containers for storage of milk products and oils could also have been brought from other areas to the north. A small description of trade as far back as 1756 is given by Padre Tranquillo, a Christian missionary, who visited Tanahũ at this time. He mentions the presence of "... some musalmans in Tanhoun", which according to D.R. Regmi (1961: 32-4) are said to be "Bangle Traders" from "North Bihar." It is also known that the northern border people, Manangbas, and Bhotiyas, depended partly on trade for a living due to their lack of resources and shorter growing seasons.

The salt trade through Khot Khola at this early time was a petty affair ... tales of weighing the salt and grain with gravel, of wetting it for greater volume, and of outright looting of stock piles are commonly recounted by the descendants of those early barterers.

At first, the trade was pursued locally by the Ghale Gurung clansmen of Tilje village and vicinity and to some extent by lowland Nepalese from Lamjung, with Tibetans from across the frontier.

(Messerschmidt and Gurung 1973:215)

They could easily have been supplying the Bandipur area with salt in exchange for rice at equal amounts. There seems to be little evidence, legendary or otherwise, of trade conducted by Magars.

The above legends, physical evidence, and written accounts concerning the 1700's have been presented in order to provide some historical background for understanding the major change which was to take place at the end of that century. In the following section of this paper, a discussion of this major change and how it affected the patterns of life in Bandipur is presented.

II. BANDIPUR GROWTH - INFLUX OF NEWARS AND TRADE

Around the beginning of the 19th century, there began an influx of a new population in the area of Bandipur. From Bhaktapur, in the Kathmandu Valley, a number of Newar families of reported merchant status began moving into the community. Although the exact years during which the preliminary migration occurred are not yet known, according to two written male kinship records which were made available to me in Bandipur, the first persons to move from Bhaktapur lived at least seven generations ago. This would place the start of migration in the period 1775-1800. This new influx marked the beginning of a major change in subsistence patterns, and absorption of new cultural patterns and traditions into the community, which brought a transformation of a rural hill village into a thriving cosmopolitan trade center.

The Newars had a well established reputation for trading as an independent means of livelihood. Elsewhere, as early as the beginning of the 17th century, Newars had established commercial relations between Tibet and Kathmandu by setting up a Newar colony in Lhasa, Tibet. This eventually began the Newari monopolization of north-south trade with Tibet. At the same time, Newari traders were encouraged by King Ram Shah (1605-1633) to open up trade in Gorkha, just north of Bandipur. But due to the "scarcity of marketable produce", this Gorkha trade did not succeed until 1754. (M.C. Regmi 1971: 20, 24, Gyawali 2019 B.S.: 195, Stiller 1968:48).

When significant Newar migration eventually took place around 1800, Bandipur rapidly developed as an important center. Hamilton shows Bandipur on his map drawn about that time (Figure 13), and

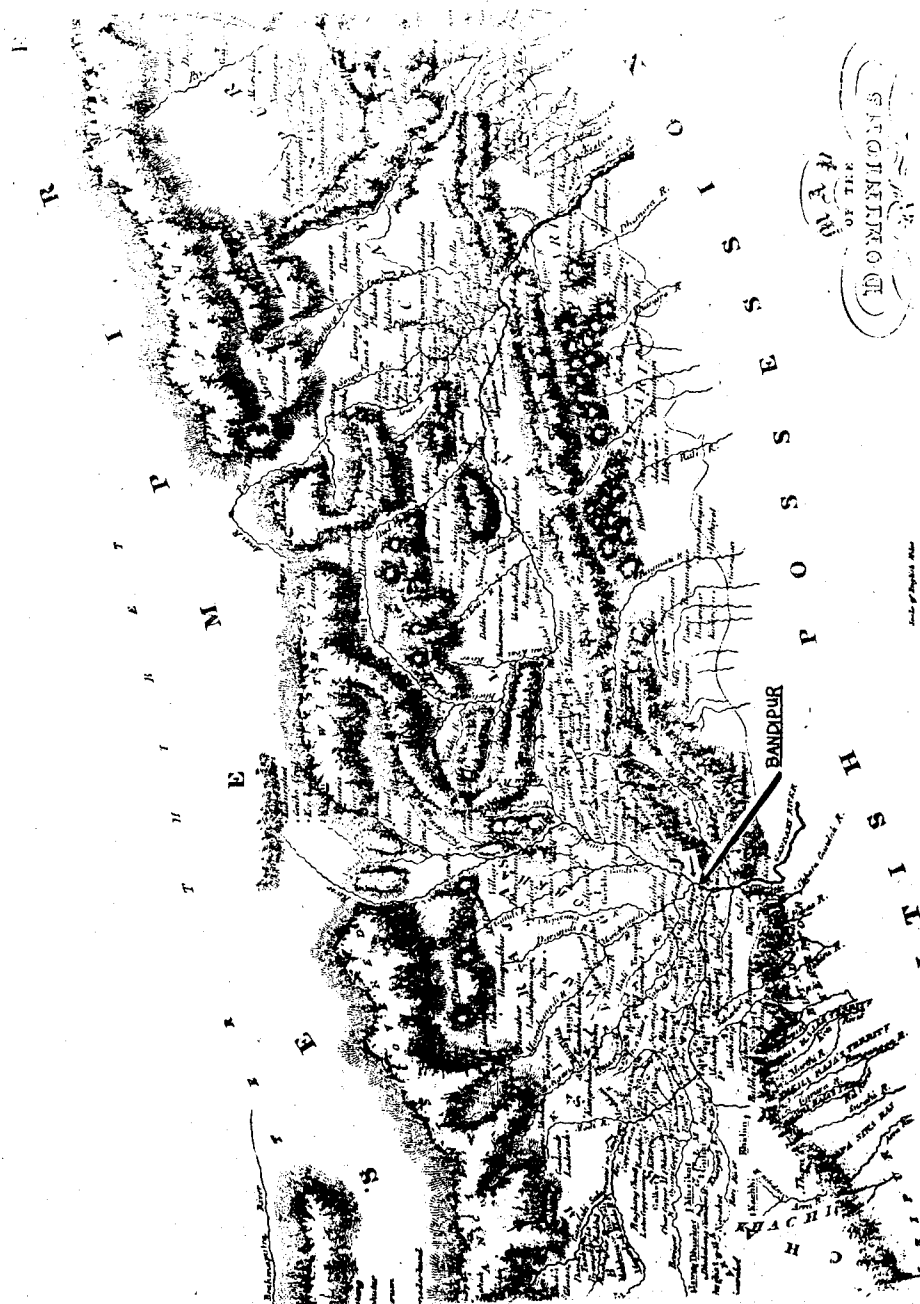


Figure 13. Portion of Map of The Dominions of Gorkha (from Hamilton, Op.Cit.) showing Bandipur.

states, "In the western wing of Tanahung were the capital and Bandi,⁷ two places of some consequence" (Hamilton 1819: 184).

Although Hamilton (p. 185-190, 197-98) considered the major north-to-south trade routes of this time as being from Rerighat via Butwal to Devghat and Kathmandu to Hetaura, he also describes a trade route existing along the Marsyangdi River (Bhot Khola). This represents the north-south trade route with which Bandipur was, and is, directly connected to Tibet on the north and India on the south.

The Chief of Lamjung ... was not only followed in war by his kinsman the Chief of Kaski, but by the Raja of Tanahung. Lamjung after the loss of Gorkha, was a cold country bordering on the snowy peaks of Emodus, and inhabited by Bhotiyas, with some Brahmans, Khasiyas in the warmer vallies. It contained no mine of any importance, nor any town of note except the capital; and the chief advantage, after the loss of Gorkha, that the Raja enjoyed, was the commerce with Bhotan or Tibet which was carried on through a passage in Emodus called Siklik. Many goods were conveyed by this route to Lamjung, and from thence, by Dewghat, and Bakra, into the low country; but this trade has been interdicted by the present Government of Nepal, which is very jealous of the Raja of Tanahung, to whom Bakra still is secured by the Company's protection.

(Hamilton 1819: 243)

This trade route, which existed up until the 1960's, is shown in Figure 14. As mentioned in the above quote, it was temporarily closed in the early 1800's. This was done mainly to prevent invasions from the south by foreign troops, and to channel trade traffic into a limited number of routes for easier collections of the newly-imposed customs (Hamilton p. 180). The government order to close the Bandipur track in June 1804 reads:

In case of any person has constructed unauthorized tracks in your area, discover and locate such tracks and install dikes and plant thorny bushes there in such a manner that no person can pass through them. In case any person tries to pass (through such tracks) forcibly, capture him if possible, or else fell him with poisoned arrows.

(M.C. Regmi 1971: 164-65)

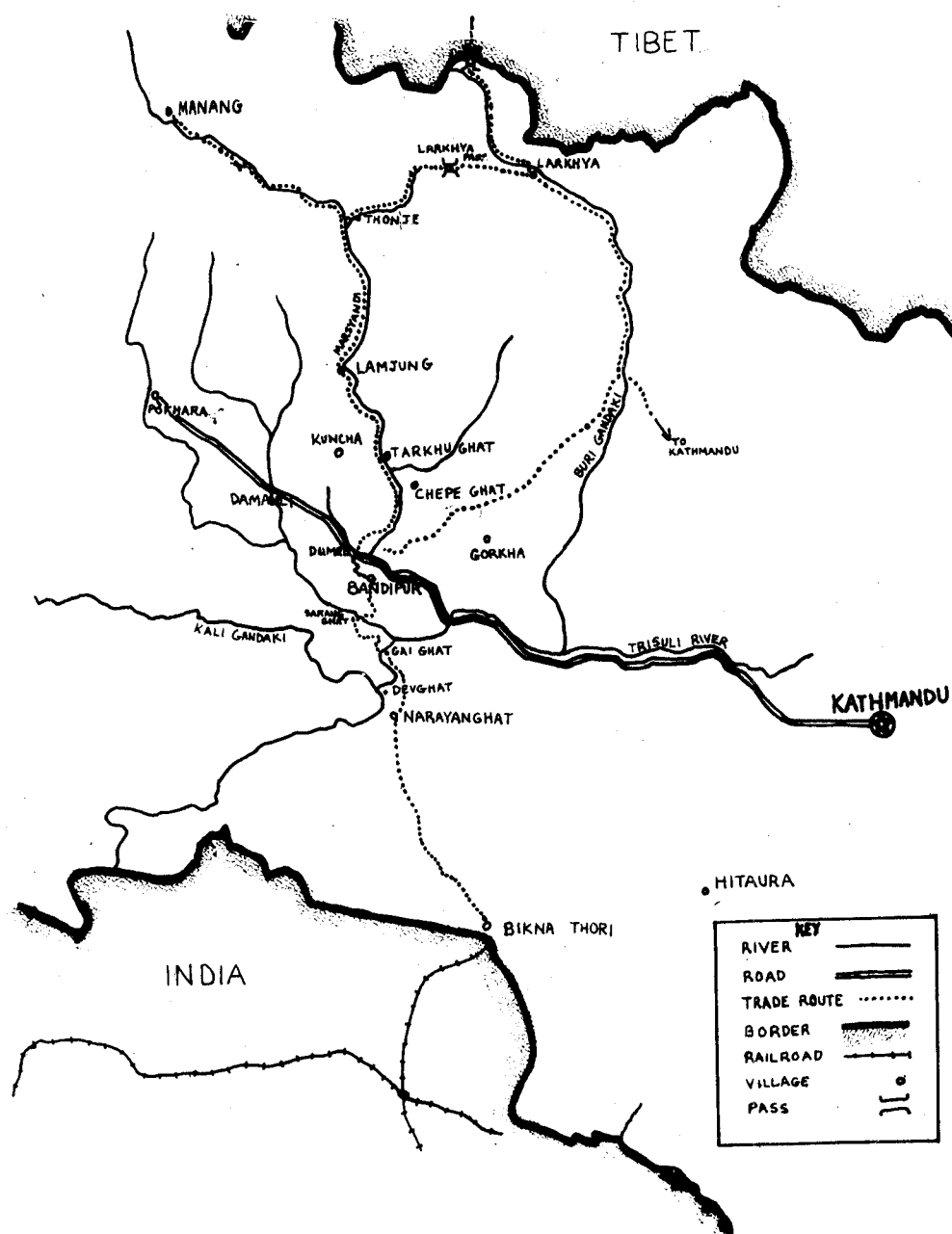


Fig. 14. North-south trade route via Bandipur.
(Map prepared by author).



Fig. 14a. Marsyandi River Valley north of Bandipur near Tarkhughāt.

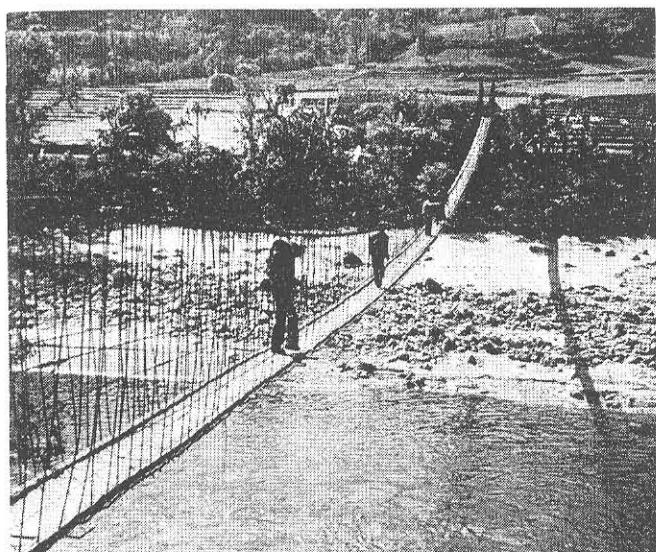


Fig. 14b. Suspension Bridge over the Seti Gandaki at Sarang Ghāt.

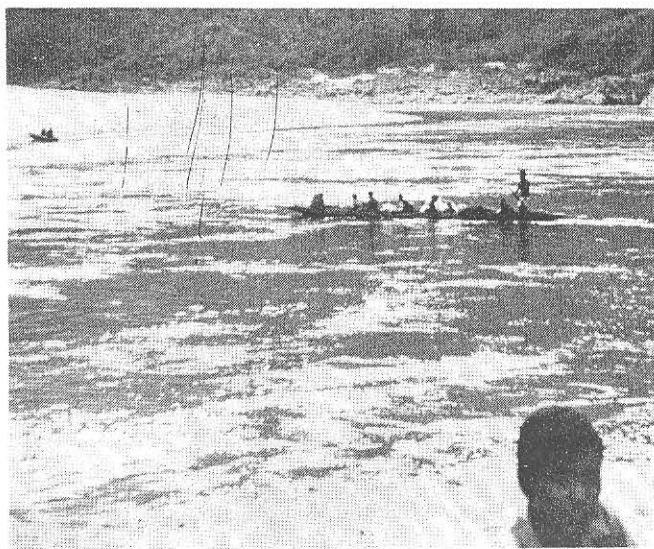


Fig. 14d.
Dugout canoe leaves from Gai-ghāt for Narayanghāt.

Fig. 14c. Ferry at Gai-ghāt.

Another cause of main track closings is mentioned by Stiller (1968: 51-2) in his discussion of the sanyāsi rebellion. Requested by the British, Prithvi Narayan Shah actually agreed to close off some main routes into Nepal which were used as escape routes for the fleeing sanyāsis.

If such an order for closure of a track was needed, there obviously must have been a track which was worth closing. Indeed, the route through Bandipur (a walking road) shows evidence of long usage. Stone staircases are set in on much of the road and have become polished by the long wear.

The early trade probably began as Tibetan salt in exchange for Nepali rice. Eventually other products were also traded. From Tibet came medicinal plants, various herbs (e.g. jimbu), nirmasi or musk, paper, silver, gold dust, wool products, horses, and goats. These were traded for buffaloes, European articles, corals, cottons, tobacco, spices, pepper, wrought copper, iron and brass, glassware, mustard oil, and kerosene (Hamilton 1819: 212-13). Nepal also exported paper, copper, ivory, and timber (floated through Devghat) (Hamilton, p. 181) to India in exchange for cottons, velvet, British wools, silks, firearms, iron, spices, salt, pepper, and leather (Hodgson 1874: 105-20). In addition to the trade conducted between these countries, Bandipur was strongly involved in internal trade with areas directly north and south of Bandipur. With profits obtained from their trade, the Newars were able to purchase land holdings, especially fertile land to the north along the Marsyangdi and south of the present Gorkha airstrip (Phalungtar). Land to the south of Bandipur was also purchased.

Among the several reasons for migration of Bhaktapur Newars to Bandipur was the fact that Bandipur had a highly desirable climate and was naturally devoid of malaria. But the strongest attraction to the Bandipur area seems to have been the prospect of the development of a major North-South trade center, relying mostly on trade and trade profits as a means of subsistence, with agriculture as a secondary enterprise.

Although this influx of trade probably had little immediate effect on the agrarian communities in Bandipur and the surrounding area, over the past two hundred years it has greatly influenced the traditional patterns of subsistence in these communities. In some cases, it has caused these communities to adopt alternate sources of income, as we shall see. The survival and success of any trade or business center is largely dependent upon its involvement with surrounding communities. This interdependence, coupled with Newari resourcefulness and investment capital brought about the shift in Bandipur from a rural hill village to a thriving trade center.

Newar Architecture and Crafts and Effects of Newar Immigration on Local Crafts

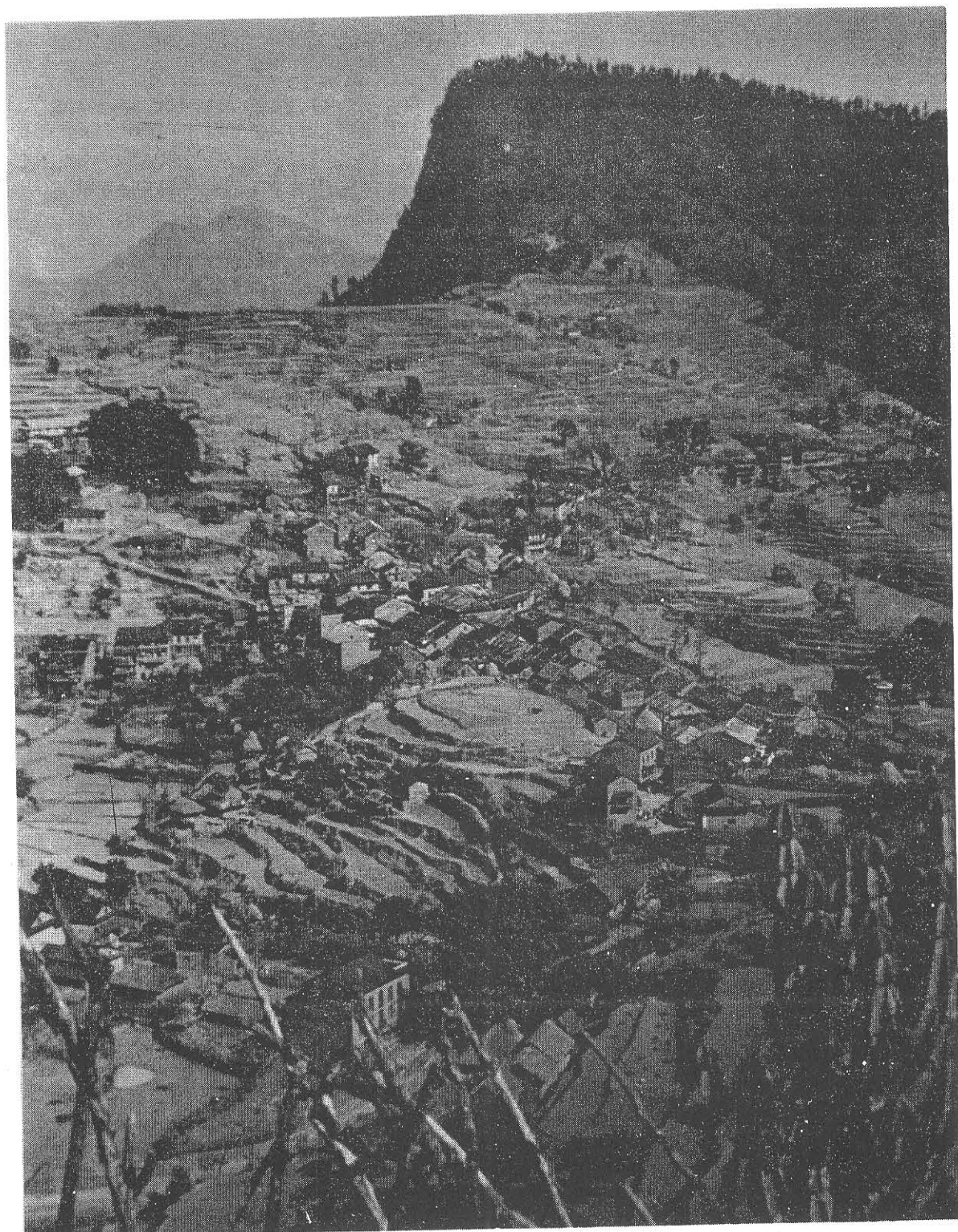
The Newars have long been famous for their proficiency in many activities. In addition to being skilled merchants and effective administrators, they are known as the "true artisans of Nepal" (Bista 1967: 169) because of their craftsmanship in the Kathmandu Valley.

Their reputation had reached Tibet and China also, and Christian missionaries have reported the existence of large colonies of Newar craftsmen and artisans in Lhasa.

(M.C. Regmi 1971:23)

It seems only natural that the most obvious evidence of Newar influence in Bandipur would be captured in their architecture and hand crafted articles. The Newars, unlike the Magars, settled and built their homes along a narrow, level saddle, wide enough only for the width of the bazaar with houses on either side (Figures 15 and 16). As can be seen in Figure 17, they introduced a style of architecture which contrasted sharply with that of the Magars. The Newars used brick which they manufactured in Bandipur from local clay as their main building material, and also produced clay tiles for roofing material. Stones were worked and chiseled to make close-fitting blocks for the foundations of homes. The wooden beams and supports in the home were worked into square shaped notched posts or boards, and many were decorated with an array of detailed relief carving. The most elaborate carving appears on the windows and window grilles, doors, eaves, trim, and eave struts. Relief carving was used for many shutters and window arches. Very few, if any, nails were used. Beams were held together by a mortise and tenon technique (Figures 18 and 19).

When compared with Bhaktapur architecture, Bandipur architecture is almost identical in many respects. The homes are quite sturdy and weatherproof. Walls are thick, indoor walls are painted, many homes have carved cabinets and room-to-room doors. The "stairs" in a Newar home are constructed with boards, and usually have hand railings. A standard Newar home in Bandipur is usually three to four stories high with an open courtyard in the middle. Balconies may be built out over the courtyard, as well as in front over the street. Drain spouts collect roof water, which is channelled and pours from the four corners of the roof into a large holding tank in the center of the courtyard (Figure 20). Later in Bandipur's development, much of the brick work was covered with cement work (Figure 21), and roof tiles were replaced by tin and slate. A photograph and short description of Bandipur before these renovations were introduced appears in P. Landon's Nepal, Vol.2 (1928:21).



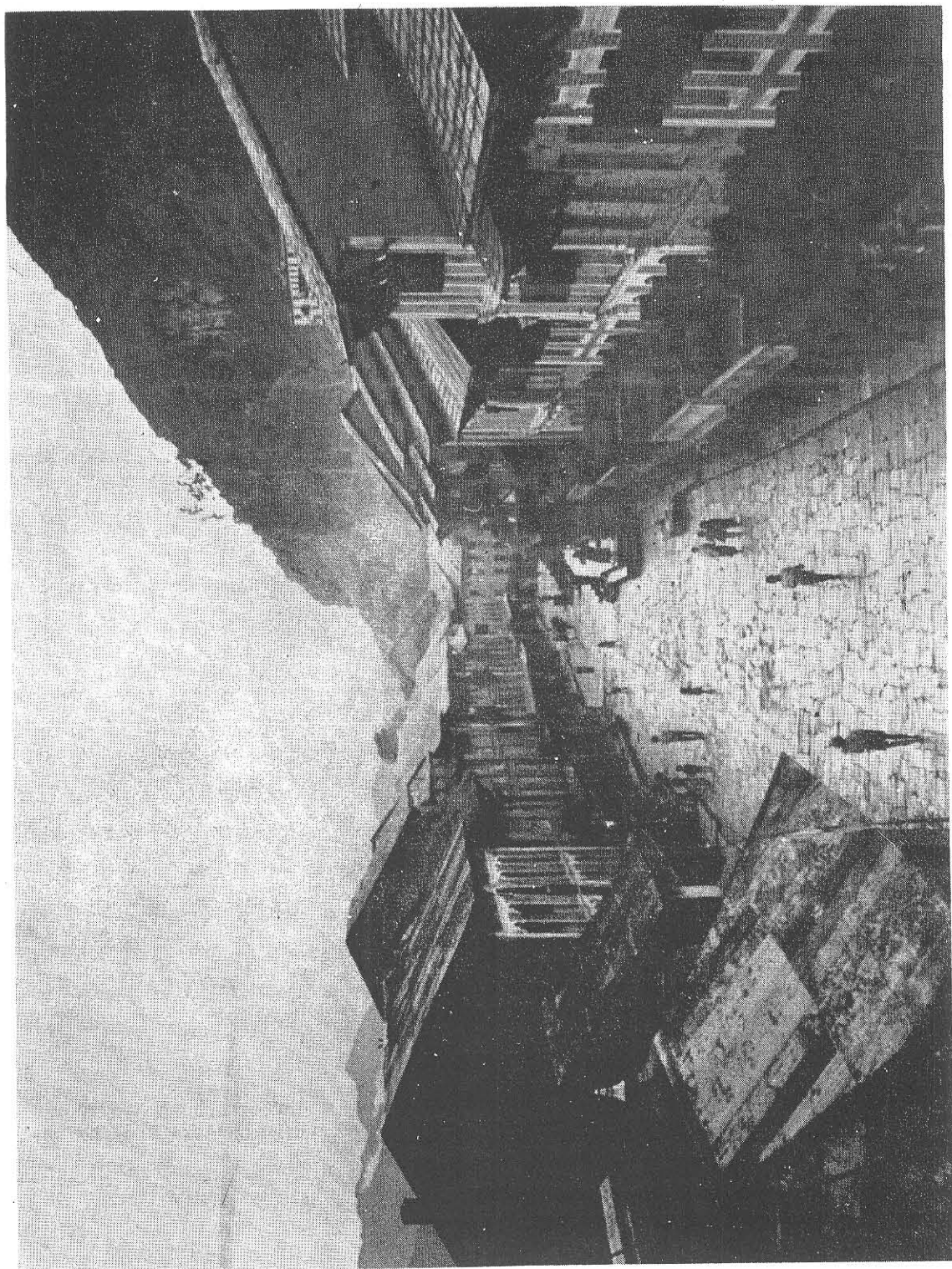


Fig. 16. Full view of Bandipur Bazaar (main bazaar) showing Newar homes and temples.

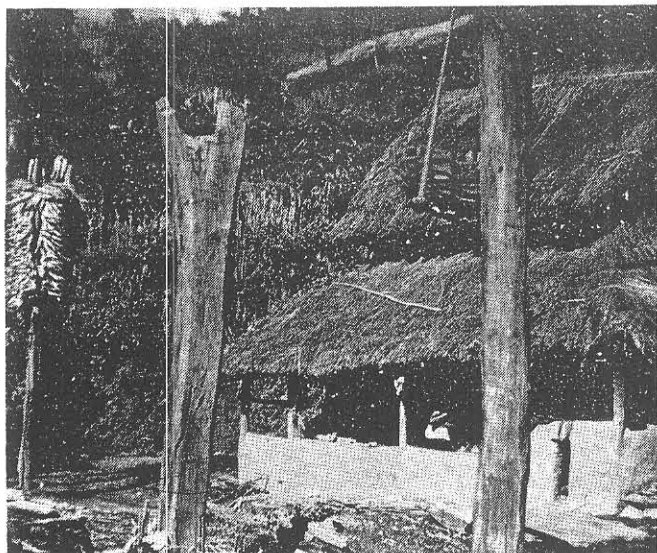


Fig. 17a. Magar home near Bandipur.

Fig. 17b. Newar architecture in Bandipur
Bazaar (main bazaar) looking East.

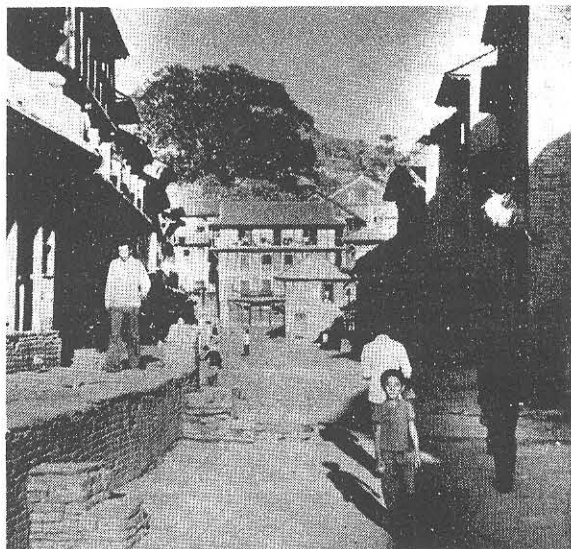


Fig. 17c. Newar architecture in Bandipur
Bazaar (main bazaar) looking west.



Fig. 17. Comparison of Magar and Newar architecture.



Fig. 18a. Eave decorations.

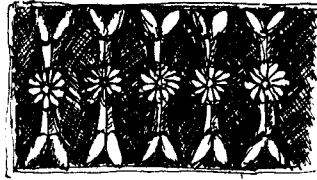


Fig. 18b, and 18c. Window grilles.

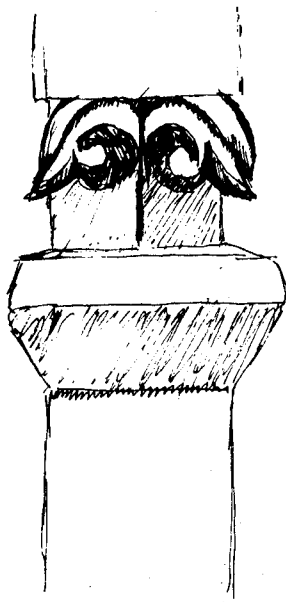


Fig. 18d. Post carving.

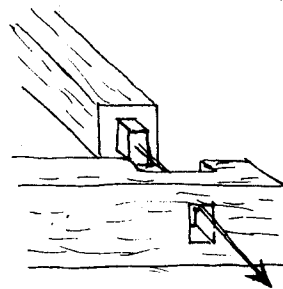


Fig. 18e. Mortise and Tenon technique of construction.

Fig. 18. Newar woodwork and carving in Bandipur.
(Drawings by Helen, Robert and Linda Iltis).



Fig. 19.

Enlarged drawing of relief carving on wooden window in abandoned home of Bandipur.

The identifying characteristic of a Newar bazaar home is the store front (Figure 22). This consists of the ground floor front room which faces on the bazaar. The front wall is made of grooved posts and sliding slats which can be removed in order to adjust the opening to full or half length during the day, or completely replaced and locked during the night. This creates a true market atmosphere, as goods, especially cloth, could be seen by people walking in the bazaar. The open store front also marks the occupation of each household.

The temples and shrines built by the Newars in Bandipur are also similar to the ones in Bhaktapur. There are three two-tier pagoda temples in Bandipur, the largest of which is located in the main bazaar (Figure 23). These temples are foci of high craftsmanship. The temple door arches are done in detailed brass work with three-dimensional figures and flags. Carved woodwork lines and trims the windows and doors, while highlighting the temple struts as well (Figure 24). Inside the temple are numerous detailed stone deities, and one of silver. A famous marble statue, once the main deity at this temple, was stolen several years ago. Deities were also made by the lost wax technique in Bandipur (Figure 25). The artisans who made them were the only Buddhist inhabitants of Bandipur in recent memory. Sunwars (gold and silver smiths), well known for their fine quality work, also left their mark on Bandipur's temples. Large quantities of jewelry were made by these metal-smiths, who still reside in Bandipur today. Copper and brass metal workers provided marketable products of superior quality, which sold well in the hills and accounted for most of the water jugs in the area.

The crafts mentioned so far were produced almost exclusively by men. Weaving was usually done by women. Although the method used by the Newars for weaving cloth was similar to the method used by Magar women, Newari weaving was usually done indoors. Weaving was one of the crafts which was extensively exploited for production of export goods. A small factory, established by the Newars near the park (tundikhel), provided employment for many young women and a supplemental source of income for their families. This weaving was done by both Newars and Magars on "throw shuttle" looms at first, and later on "fly shuttle" looms (Figure 26) (Shrestha 1967:141).

Although basket and mat weaving was done by Magars prior to the arrival of Newars into Bandipur, the new market situation brought about an increase in production and sales. Since Bandipur was at a mid-way point on the trade route people were always needing replacement dokos (baskets) for transporting goods.

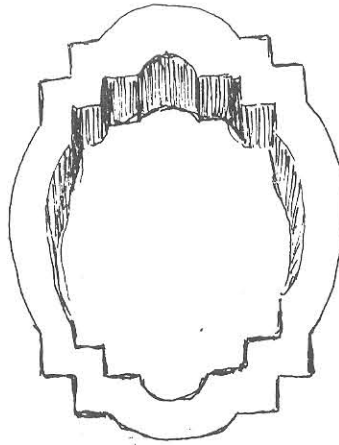


Fig. 20.

Drawing of courtyard water holding tank as seen from balcony (Dimensions - 5ft.x 8ft.x3ft. deep).

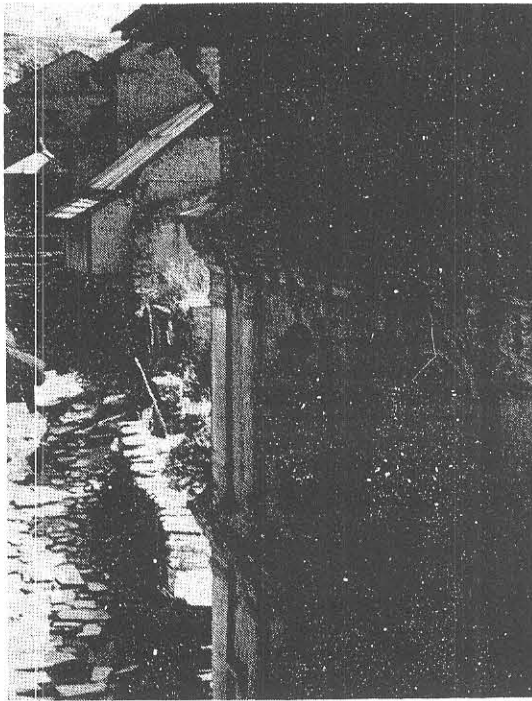


Fig. 21a. Photo showing cement work overlay on brick.



Fig. 21b. Drawings of cement work decoration of house front.

Fig. 21. Examples of cement work on Newar homes of Bandipur, added later in the 1900's.

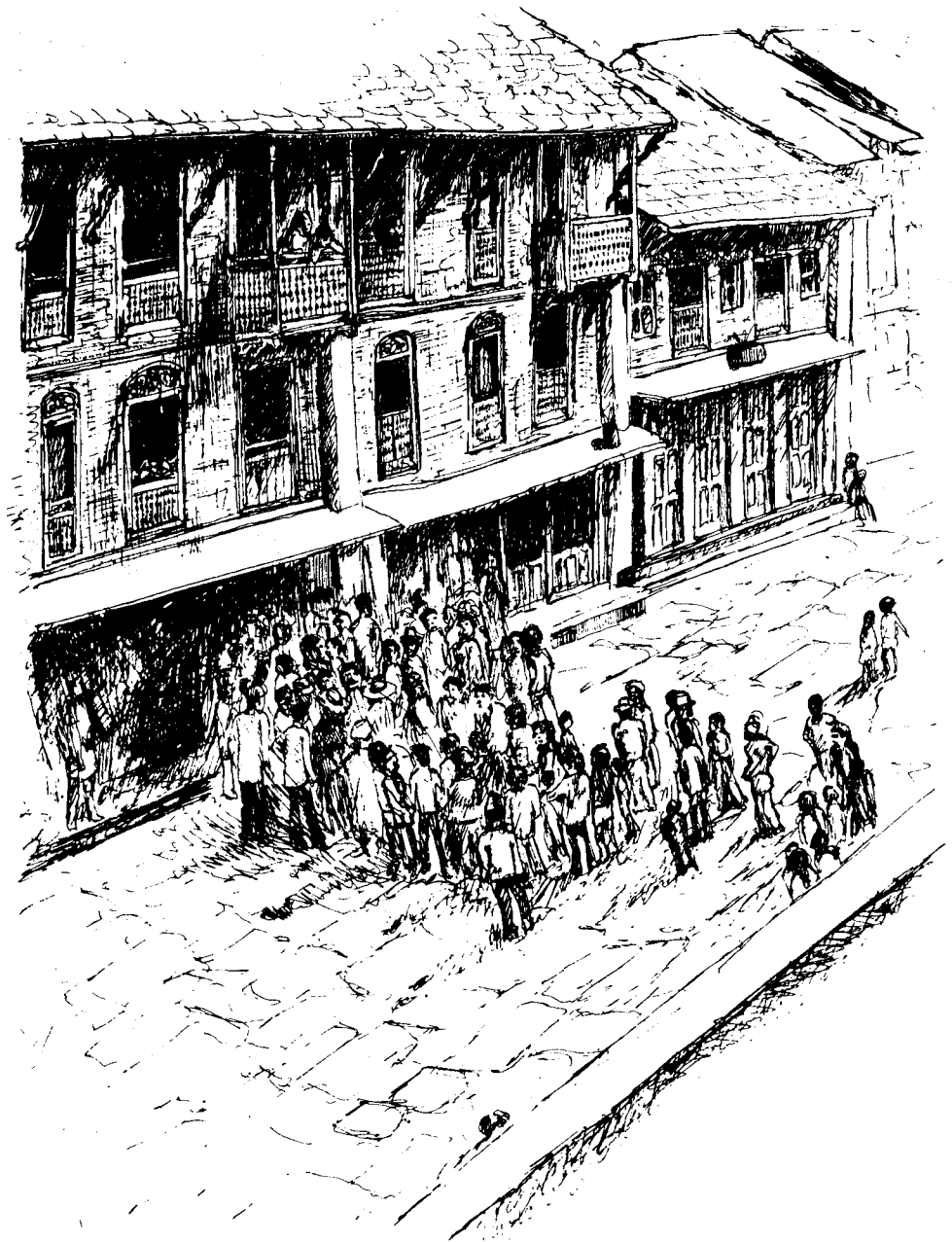


Fig. 22. Drawing of bazaar architecture in Bandipur, with carved windows, and store fronts.

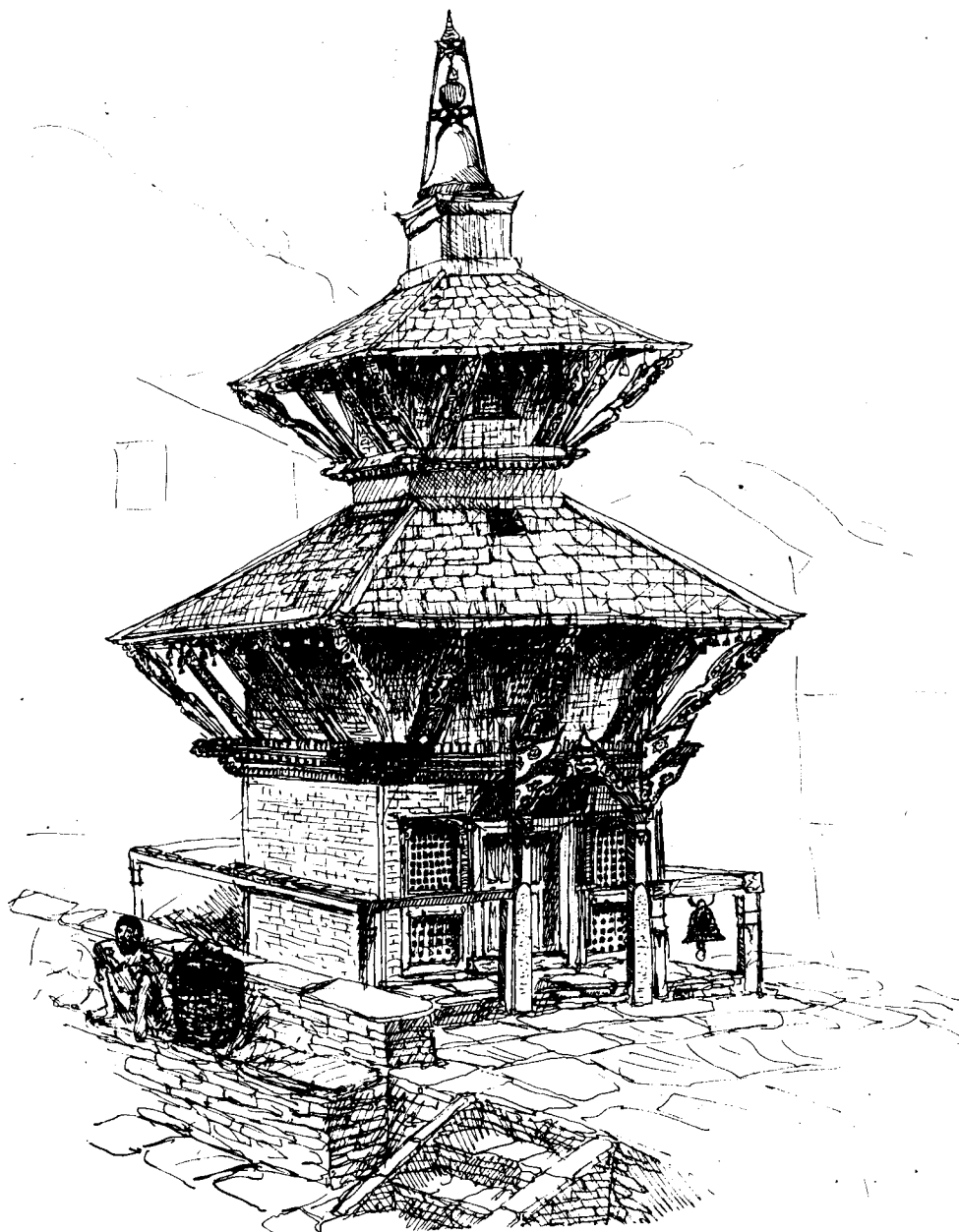


Fig. 23. Vindu Vashini temple in the main bazaar of Bandipur-most elaborate of three similar pagoda temples in Bandipur.

Fig. 24. Close-up photos of temple woodwork.



Fig. 24a. Corner posts.

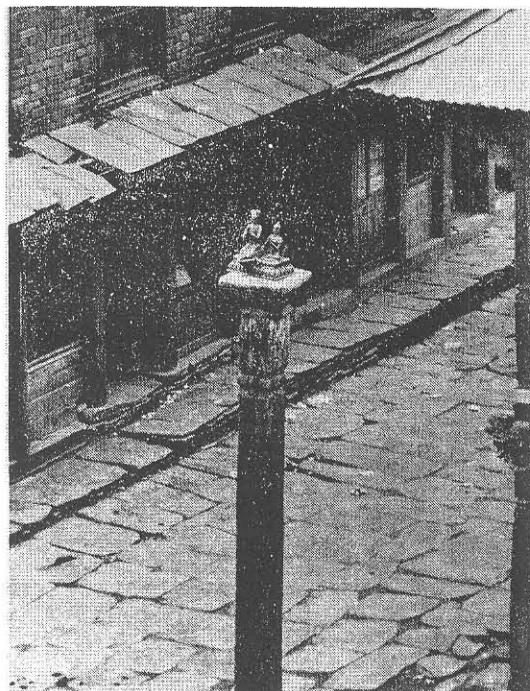


Fig. 25. Brass figures facing temple-made by lost wax technique.

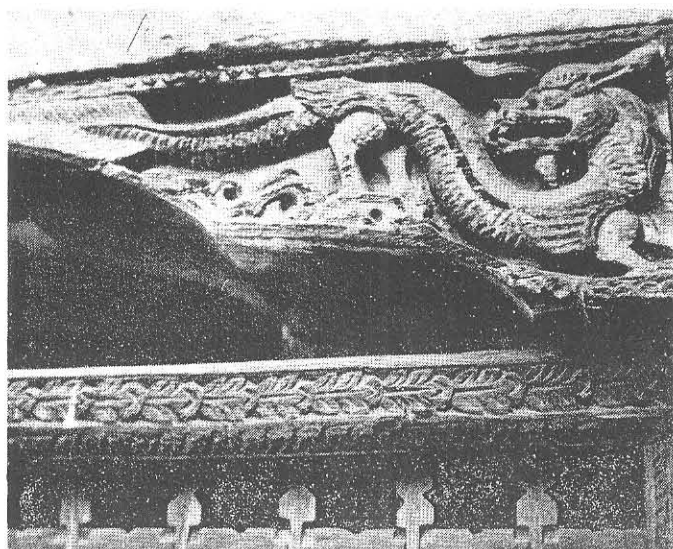


Fig. 24b. Window trim.

In the same manner, other traditional craftsmen such as kāmis (metal workers), sarkis (leather workers), damais (tailors) and gaine (musicians) found in Bandipur an increased market for their goods and services. Both Newar and Magar craftsmanship provided necessary elements of culture through which the community as a whole was able to expand and increase its options.

New Supplementary Income Options

As already stressed above, the new presence of a bazaar provided a convenient and attractive place to sell and trade privately produced goods. It also provided an increased demand for hired labour in connection with farming and transport. Although some Newar families today are skilled agriculturalists in the Kathmandu Valley, those who came to Bandipur were predominantly merchant families. These families invested in agricultural lands around Bandipur in Japri Phānt and Marsyangdi River Valley. Although many Newars farmed these lands themselves, others often hired Magars, Sarkis or Chhetris to do their farming. The increased trade necessitated hiring of reliable people for transportation of goods to the south (Bikna Thori, head of British rail service) and north (Tonje, Manang, Larkhe, via Tarkughat). Since the track of the trade route from the Tibetan border to the Indian border was quite rugged, pack animals were used with discretion (Messerschmidt and Gurung 1973:200). Although mule trains were not unknown in Bandipur, most of the transportation seems to have been done by porters. These new supplementary forms of income for the residents of communities surrounding Bandipur began a shift from agrarian subsistence patterns to a joint dependence on both agriculture and trade. The expansion of trade in this area provided cash profits which were then invested either privately in more landholdings, or communally toward improvement of local facilities: e.g. road maintenance, lengthening of stone stairways, etc.

For the first portion of the Rāna rule (1846-1951), Bandipur was a zonal headquarters for the Zone West No. 3. This naturally increased the flow of traffic through Bandipur Bazaar, further enlarging opportunities for trade and commerce, and creating a convenient site for formal business transactions. More job opportunities arose, and more people who were attracted to the variety of opportunities migrated to the bustling bazaar in the hope of improving their economic situations. The zonal headquarters was eventually moved to Pokhara, while Bandipur remained a district headquarters.

Festivals and the Economy

In Bandipur, as in Bhaktapur, the Newars never short-cut their festivals. There is a common saying in Bandipur:

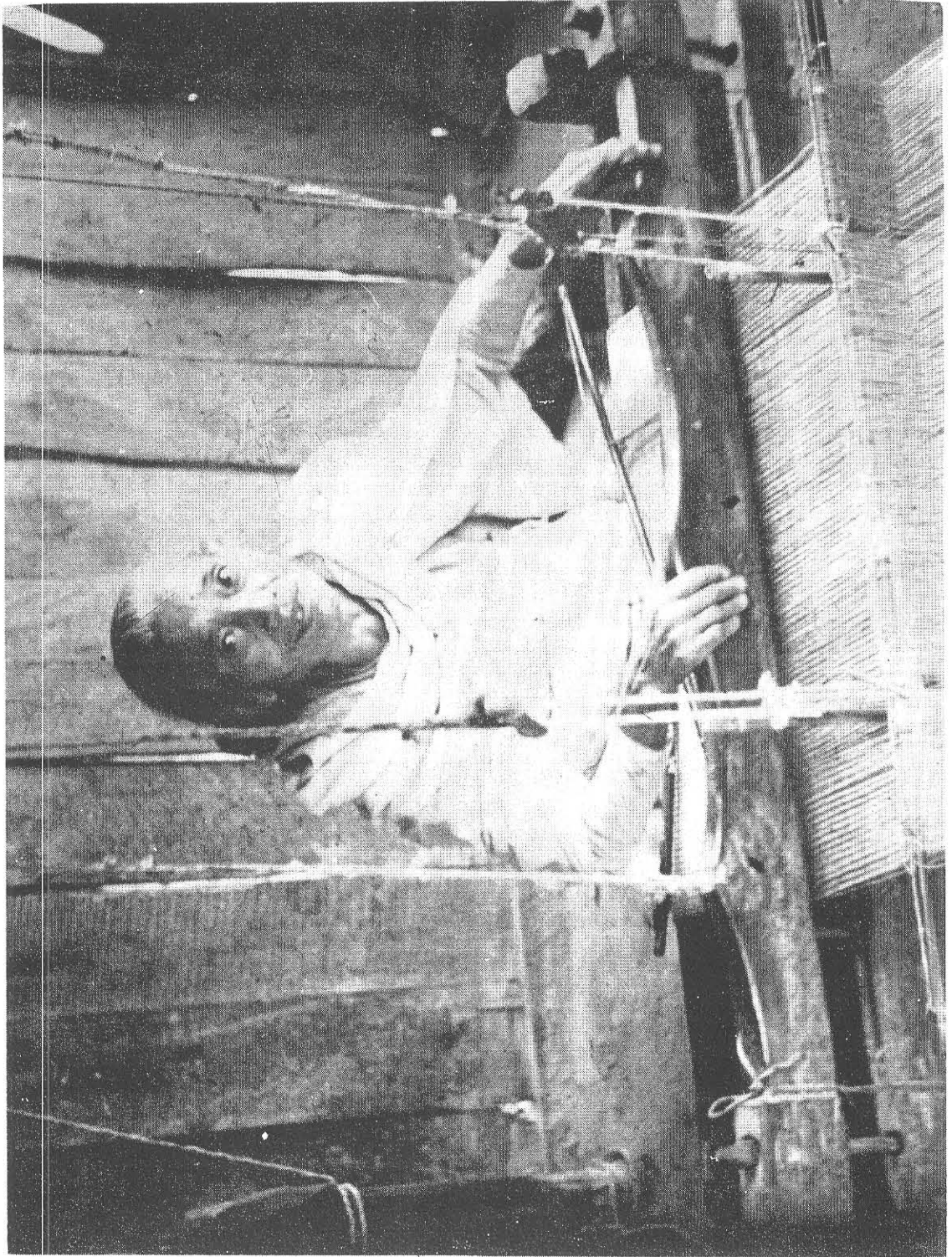


Fig. 26. Newar woman weaves on fly-shuttle loom in Bandipur home.

Chhetri bigreko moja le
Newar bigreko bhoja le

The Chhetri is ruined by a lust for things.
The Newar is ruined by a lust for feasting.

Aside from possibly implying an economic relationship between these two groups, this saying expresses a self-recognition of the zeal with which Newars feel they celebrate their festivals. In fact, all the inhabitants of Bandipur Bazaar and the surrounding area celebrate their festivals with great zeal. Since such a variety of ethnic groups are represented in the Bandipur area, there are also a great variety of festivals.

Public festivals fall into two broad categories, mela and jātra. Melas are held throughout the hill and Tarai regions of Nepal, and might best be described as "fairs." They are usually held in connection with a specific ritual occasion or religious holiday such as Śiva rātri; and frequently occur in the vicinity of a famous pilgrimage site, but rarely in village or town. Besides observing the specific ritual connected with the mela, people of communities ranging from two to five days in distance bring food and goods to sell and trade. During the mela, which may last for several days, they camp out and conduct business from leaf-walled shelters. There is always a variety of entertainment -- dramas, gambling, singing and dancing, wining and dining, and, for the young people, courting. Newar business families from Bandipur still send business representatives to set up temporary shops for selling goods at melas in the surrounding area.

Jātras are also held throughout Nepal, but unlike mela, they are more localized, relating to a specific ritual of one community, and held within that community. The jātras held in Bandipur are primarily of Newar origin. Since large ritual processions involving music, dance, and drama skits are the focus of attention, people begin planning for jātras several weeks in advance of the actual date. Accompanied by cymbals, drums, flute, śahnai (double-reed aerophone), and narsinga (S-curved copper trumpet), the participants in the procession dance and act out, to the music, a storyline of a story associated with the ritual being observed. The procession moves through the bazaar to all the branches, stopping at every tol (quarter or division of the bazaar) and cok (square) (Figure 1). In Bandipur, some of these processions last far into the night, or all night.

These jātras are always well attended by many people from the surrounding area. Magar and Gurung family groups, or groups of young friends, come together to Bandipur Bazaar to observe the ritual processions. Like a mela, these jātras also provide a



Fig. 27. Traditional Newar festival procession on Gai Jātra (in Bhaktapur).



Fig. 28. Bandipur Damai dances in Jātra procession (in Bandipur).

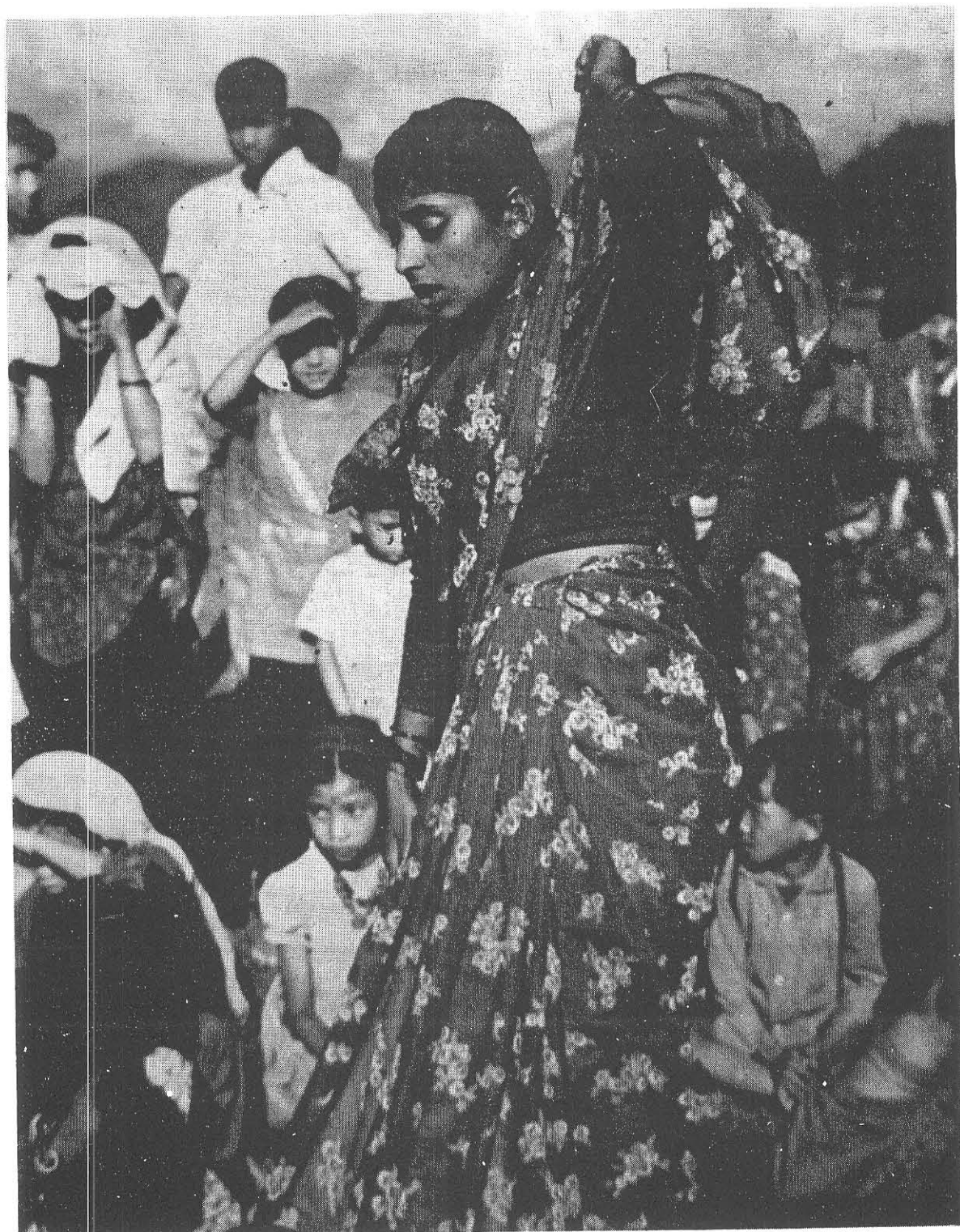


Fig. 29. Brahman girl dances in her finery at the festival of the Tij mela in Bandipur.

variety of other types of entertainment, such as gambling and winning and dining. The Magars and Gurungs form groups of singers (men) and dancers (women), and establish themselves in the various ṭols, under the covered verandas along the bazaar. The young Newar men also stroll through the bazaar to enjoy the Magar and Gurung performances. Many admire and even try to learn the various songs and dances. The Newar business families always open their stores during the jātra and keep them open all night. Those who normally sell only cloth or supplies usually have food and drink available as well. The stores are always thronging with people on these occasions, and the best selling items are cigarettes, tea, and liquor.

Both mela and jātra give stimulus and reinforcement to the economic and trade network centered in Bandipur, while helping to promote friendly relationships which transcend a purely economic plane of interaction. Ties between caste and ethnic groups are strengthened; the Magar and Gurung populations are attracted to the large-scale Newari performances, while Newars in their turn are attracted to local hill traditions (c.f. the Khadga' Devi sword festival described above). Magar and Gurung groups extend their social and courtship horizons among the wide audience drawn to the Newari festivals, while Newari youths attend Magar and Gurung events to broaden their own social horizons.

Education and Rāna Repression

Brahman priests were probably the first official teachers hired for formal education in the Bandipur community. The Newars organized Bhajans (singing groups), which on special occasions hired local Pandits to perform ritual recitations of Sanskrit Purāṇas or epics, and to translate and summarize them in Nepali. At first, these Pandits were hired by Newari families to teach Sanskrit to at least one child in the family. Eventually, a school was established in Bandipur, with such Pandits as its teachers. But during the Rāna regime, from the mid-1800's to the mid-1900's, education throughout Nepal was severely repressed. In Bandipur, the story is well known of how a local official was threatened for having assisted in the founding of a publicly supported library, Padma Pustakalaya (Pradhan n.d.). It was not until the end of the Rāna regime in 1951 that further educational development projects were permitted to resume in Bandipur.

The Rānas had established a military outpost in Bandipur, and a training ground was levelled for their use where the tundi-khel (park) stands today. Because of the educational suppression and exploitation, etc., anti-Rāna sentiment was high in Bandipur among all the groups of people. Finally in January 1951, a revolt was organized in the bazaar. A group of people rallied with a Nepali flag and began jeering and marching up the hill toward

the military barracks. The military was unsure of what type of action to take. At first, blanks were shot to disperse the crowds. Later, when this failed to deter the demonstrators, they began shooting real bullets from behind the walls of the Khadga Devi courtyard into the crowds. This ended the demonstration, but not before seven people had been shot to death. "The shouts and sounds of gunfire and bullets ricocheting off the wooden windows" still rings in the ears of many who recall this day. That night, the military contingent fled from Bandipur.

After the ousting of the Rānas, educational facilities were established, including a high school and the public library. A literary journal, Mulbāto ("main road"), also began publication at this time from Bandipur. And many Bandipur residents made valuable and popular contributions to this journal.

Effects of Malaria Eradication

Malaria eradication in Chitwan (in the Tarai) began in the early 1950's, and marked the opening of this area to settlement by the hill people. The prospect of new land investment was a great attraction, and Newars of Bandipur jumped at this new opportunity to expand their monopoly of trade southward by setting up a new business community called Narayanghāt along the Narayani River. From this point, the Indian border could be reached in one day's walk.

One of the first families to leave Bandipur and migrate to Chitwan obtained a contract to grow fodder for HMG royal elephants. Several other families soon followed and purchased large amounts of land for farming. The development in Chitwan made the connection between Bandipur and Bhikna Thori, the railhead at the India - Nepal border stronger, and strengthened the southern half of the trade route by providing an additional branch center in the commercial network from which localized linkage could be made. At first, Bandipur Newar families occupied Chitwan on a half-year basis. In the summer months, people would stay in Bandipur where the climate was cooler. Later, after Dasain, when Bandipur area harvests were in, the father or an eldest son would spend six months on the farm land. Tharus (original inhabitants of the region) were frequently hired to work on the new landholdings. Families who wished to open new businesses were able to send one son to manage a new shop in Chitwan while the family remained in Bandipur to maintain the original shop there, resulting in two sources of cash income. Since these joint extended families were large, the spread of single nuclear units of a family north and south of Bandipur to branch center establishments was a convenient way to increase the family's resources. The central focus for such families during the first years of development of Chitwan seemed to have remained in Bandipur. This seems logical when an

examination of the entire trade route at this time shows Bandipur in the center, and the presence of Bandipur Newar descendants located in practically every major village situated on the track north and south (Figure 14). The overall effect of malaria eradication on Bandipur was no loss of families, and at the same time a gain in stronger linkage outward with better facilities.

The transport of goods to and from the Indian border was facilitated by the clearing of jungles and construction of dirt roads between Devghat and Bikna Thori. Once at Bikna Thori transport of goods and traders south into India could be accomplished by railroad. The increased accessibility of Indian goods made possible the purchase and installation of the mechanized rice mill and oil mill in Bandipur (Figure 32). Two mills were built to compensate for the large demands. The new mills were capable of hulling rice and grinding millet and flour, but the dhiki (foot operated hulling device) was retained in many places because it was the only means of making chiura (pounded rice). Oil mills almost completely replaced the hand-turned oil presses.

Later, a pressurized water pipeline system was laid down, which provided at least twenty taps in the Bazaar of Bandipur itself, and other tap outlets along the line in nearby settlements. This saved many women the arduous twenty-minute walk to the spring fountains at the edge of town. Some women recall the big business days with pain, as they were often forced to rise after the first cock crowed (about 3 A.M.) and go to the fountains early enough to get two jugs of water on the first trip, without standing in line, in time to make a second trip for another three-jug load, two in a basket and one in their hand. They laugh now at their daughters, who think 6 A.M. is too early to get up for fetching water. The new water facilities enabled the development of larger-scale farming; and with plentiful water available, it was possible to establish the Bandipur Hospital. The hospital contains about 20 beds and is well staffed, with facilities for performing minor operations. Two medical shops in Bandipur carry most of the medical supplies needed by the community.

The new development of Bandipur as a trade center, educational center, health center, and district headquarters made it a busy urban center, particularly during the winter months. Rice, flour, oil, kerosene, tobacco, cloth, copper and brass, and miscellaneous wares were of highest demand in the North; while wool, paper, chyangra (mountain goats), musk, gold and medicinal herbs were of highest demand in the South. The latest in personal and household items were always in demand both to the North and South. The older people of Bandipur today reflect on these trading days with pleasure. Some recall the days when travelling merchants laid their gold out on jute sacks in the sun for 20 rupees per tola.⁸

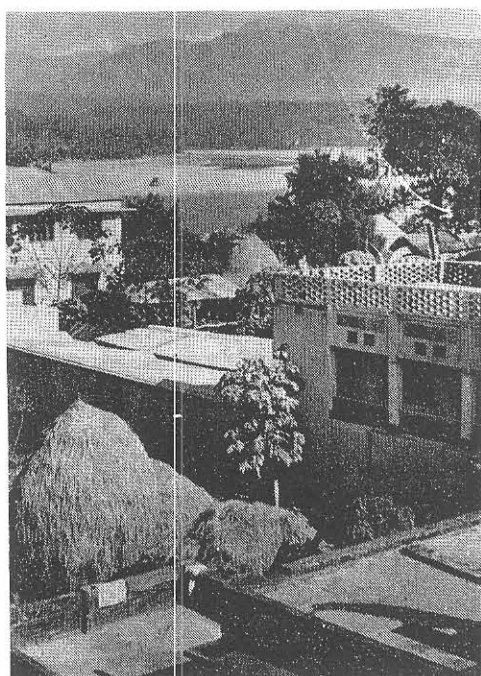


Fig. 30. Narayanghat, the new Newar business community situated along the Narayani.

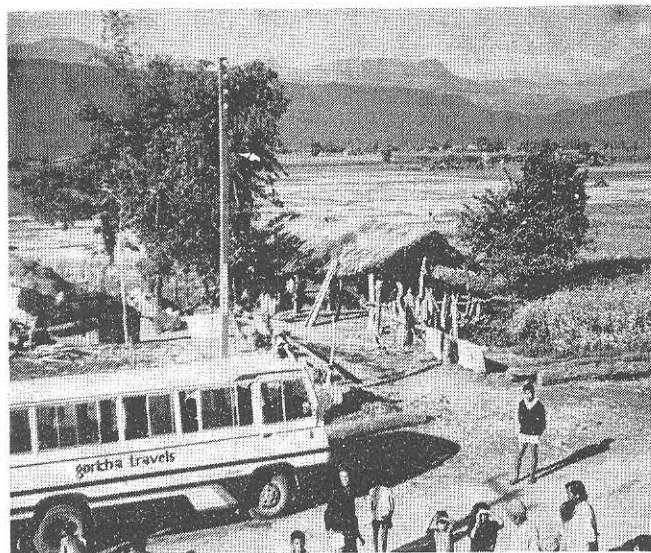


Fig. 31. Location of Bandipur Newar landholdings in Chitwan.

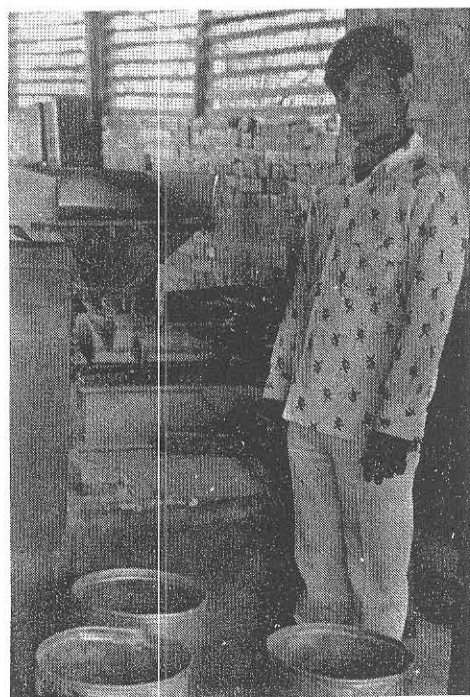


Fig. 32. One of the several mechanized rice mills brought to Bandipur via Narayanghat.

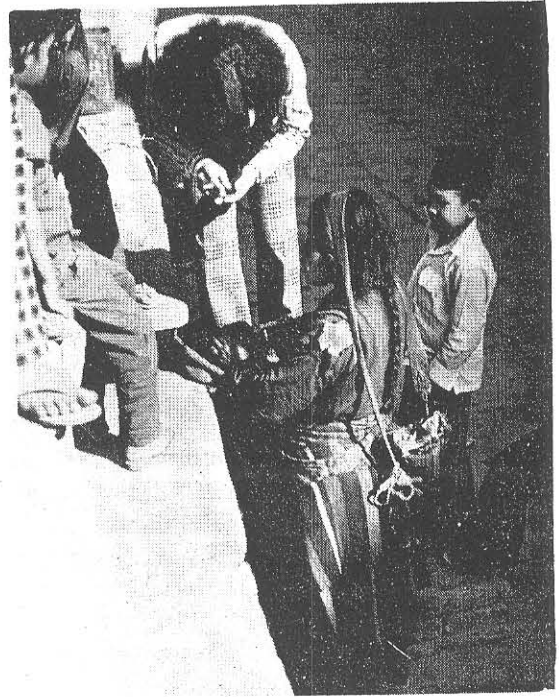


Fig. 33a. Woman from Manang sells herbal medicine to Bandipur shop owner.



Fig. 33b.

Man from Larkhya sells hand woven woolen floor covering.



Fig. 33c. Bandipur Newar cloth shop.

Fig. 33. Traders in Bandipur.

A gallon of butter (Nepali ghee) was no more than 2.5 rupees (20 cents), and 15 pāthis⁹ of paddy rice sold for 1 rupee (10 cents). There was a large market for fabrics and wool; European goods obtained illicitly in India were sold to Tibetans and Bhotias from the North. A 120-yard bolt of white fabric sold for 9 rupees. This had a negative effect on the Bandipur weaving industry, but it was an important gain to the trade industry.

Trade traffic at this time was almost non-stop activity. One woman recalled how an average day during this time began at 4 A.M. with the sound of the traders' walking sticks tapping through the Bazaar. By mid-day, the Bazaar was "as full as Asan Tole" (Central Bazaar in Kathmandu). Again, at night, she fell asleep to the sound of the walking sticks and loud voices bartering. Manāngbas from the North en route to Hong Kong, Larkhe people, and others moved consistently through the Bazaar in lines during the winter months, stopping occasionally to sell goods to the shop owners (Snellgrove 1961:209) (Figure 33). The road was so full of people travelling in both directions that it was almost impossible to be alone on the road at any time.

Conclusion

The years directly following malaria eradication proved to be what most people of Bandipur considered the peak years for living in Bandipur. Prior to and during this time, geographical changes affecting the Bandipur area proved profitable and advantageous. The Bazaar was occupied by and visited by many peoples of many occupations and from many places, and from many ethnic backgrounds (Table I). Later however, Bandipur was to see other changes which would work contrary to its interests - they would mark the beginning of a downward slide in trade, cultural unity, and family unity.

Table I
People Using Bandipur Bazaar in Peak Years

Group	Place of Origin	Religion	Occupation
Newars	Bhaktapur	Hindu (some Buddhist)	Traders
Gurung	Gandaki Zone	Hindu (some Buddhist)	Military Farmers
Magar	Tanahũ	Hindu	Farmers
Kami	Tanahũ	Hindu	Metal Workers
Sarki	Tanahũ	Hindu	Butchers Shoemakers
Kumal	Gorkha	Hindu	Potters
Chhetri	Tanahũ Pokhara	Hindu	Farmers Military
Brahman	Tanahũ	Hindu	Priests Farmers
Gaine	Pokhara (Gorkha)	Hindu	Musicians
Manāngba	Manāng	Buddhist	Traders
Bhotiya	Larkhe	Buddhist	Traders Weavers Herdsman
Indian	India	Hindu	Miscellaneous
Damai	Tanahũ	Hindu	Tailors and Musicians

III. BANDIPUR DECLINES - POLITICAL CHANGES AND A NEW ROAD

Removal of the District Headquarters

After the major military coup in 1960, King Mahendra decided to reorganize the political and administrative systems of Nepal. The country was divided into 75 development districts and fourteen zones (Rose and Fisher 1970:77). Each district also had the opportunity to relocate its official district headquarters. Bandipur was now, according to the new district boundaries, located to one side of the Tanahū district, and no longer could be considered the geographical center of the district. It was concluded that the district headquarters must be moved to a new location. It was eventually decided that the lowland confluence of the Seti Gandaki and the Madi Khola (Rivers) would be an easily accessible, more centrally located position for the new headquarters.

The idea of removing the district headquarters from Bandipur infuriated the majority of its inhabitants. Many people had invested large sums in the growth and development of Bandipur. The loss of the headquarters meant a certain major drop in traffic and trade, not to mention a loss of their community health and education facilities. There were many heated discussions and long debates concerning the change. Regardless of efforts to persuade the officials otherwise, the date for the official change was set. The Zonal Commissioner, Nanda Bahadur Malla, posted official notices of the change date in Bandipur Bazaar at night. The people had by this time built up considerable hostility toward this commissioner and his plans. Some people recall with grave anger:

Had we known such notices were being posted,
Nanda Bahadur might never have left Bandipur
alive. One woman threatened him with a rifle,
after which he left Bandipur that very night.

To effect the change of the headquarters, Nanda Bahadur ordered one person from every household in the Tanahū district to be present in Bandipur to assist in moving the offices. The Bandipur people were nevertheless prepared to resist. At first, entrances to the offices were physically blocked, and no one was permitted to enter. Later, fights broke out and kindled a mass riot, in which one person was killed and many were injured. 100 or more arrests were made, and a temporary jail was established in the court yard of the Khadga Devi temple for three days. His Majesty Mahendra, the King, was notified by wireless radio, and flew directly into Bandipur by helicopter to settle the disagreement. Several hours were spent establishing a compromise.

However, the outcome was a loss to Bandipur. The district headquarters was to be moved, without further resistance. The schools, hospital, post office, police office, and wireless radio would remain in Bandipur. King Mahendra had previously visited Bandipur 10 years earlier and personally admired Bandipur's progress. He was still concerned with Bandipur's discontent, and before leaving vowed to help Bandipur in any way he could. King Mahendra died two years later.

As was dreaded by most people, the change of the headquarters brought about significant changes. Traffic slowed down considerably, as much of the traffic was directed to Damouli (the new headquarters), one day's walk west of Bandipur. Officers and their families were forced to move to the new location. Some people saw their businesses suffer, and moved all their belongings and began new lives in Damouli. Because of the heated dispute, families split, friendships were lost, and the overall sense of unity among the people dwindled. Local peddlers, having increased their dependence on trade, were also forced to take their wares to the more frequented places (Figure 34b).

The "Chinese Road", Prithvi Highway

About the same year the district headquarters was moved (in 1968), planning for construction of a new road linking Kathmandu and Pokhara was begun. The road was to be built by and paid for by the People's Republic of China. People in Bandipur naturally took an interest in this proposal, as they felt their position along the route would be of major significance. However, the plans, when drawn up, showed the route extending along the paths of the river valley 2000 feet below Bandipur, virtually by-passing the entire town.

Meetings were held in Bandipur to discuss the problems of the future road. It was obvious to many people that the road, if built on the planned route, would have devastating effects on Bandipur. Trade traffic would again be slowed and drawn away from Bandipur Bazaar to Damouli. Buses would be available to India, and most people would be forced to move to better locations for business. Several letters were sent to the Department of Roads proposing a re-routing of the road to pass through Bandipur. A representative committee was organized in Bandipur and sent to Kathmandu for further consultation concerning the road. A meeting was held with Chinese officials and surveyors, who concluded the proposal was both "uneconomical" and "unfeasible." The Committee returned to Bandipur in hopes of some way arriving at a solution to the problem. After much discourse, it was decided that enough funds could be raised to construct a motorable dirt road between Bandipur and the new highway. The construction of the Bandipur access road was begun as soon as possible. Surveying was done with the assistance

of a Peace Corps Volunteer. The road is just now (1980) in the process of being paved. At the same time, the construction of the highway was near its completion. As early as 1970, there were 85 vehicles in the Gandaki Zone (Doherty 1975:151). The highway was completed in 1973.

The construction of the Bandipur access road was not effective in keeping large numbers of families from moving out of Bandipur and down to the highway. Nor was it effective in drawing trade up to Bandipur. In a rushed attempt to save their businesses, two small settlements, Dumre and Bimalnagar, were quickly constructed to create a trading stop along the highway road. Homes were constructed from the most readily available resources (wood and slate). Thin-walled homes of temporary quality were thrown up in a hodgepodge fashion (Figure 34). Dumre, located at the intersection of the access road and the highway, is the larger bazaar of the two, and constitutes the major bus stop. By 1975, there were about four cloth shops, numerous general stores, two copper and brass smiths, and scattered tea shops, hotels and restaurants. Dumre has a variety of ethnic groups, similar to Bandipur, but non-segregated. Newars, Thakalis, Magars, Gurungs, Brahmans, Chhetris, Kumals, and Damai all reside in this community. No temples have been built along the road. Bimalnagar is the smaller of the two towns and somewhat quieter; it marks the suspension-bridge crossing of the Marsyangdi River to Changling and on to Gorkha (Figure 35). Bimalnagar (sometimes called Bimaltar) now has a bread factory. Many of the shops along the road were prospering at the time of this study.

Effects of the Social and Economic Changes

Despite completion of the access road to Bandipur, the new highway and the move of the district headquarters had taken a major toll on Bandipur as a trading center. Table II shows the number of shops abandoned in the main bazaar in recent years, as determined from extensive discussion with people still living in Bandipur today. One can see a small effect from the malaria eradication and trade expansion in the 1945-1955 period, and, by contrast, the major effect in the years when the road was constructed and the district headquarters were moved. Trade had dwindled by 1975 to three cloth shops, six general stores, and seven tea shops. Small-scale trade had replaced large-scale trade, with cloth, kerosene (for lamps), mustard oil, tobacco, and medicine being the main items sold. Trade in Bandipur is now (1980) almost totally local. Most major thru-trade from the North and South is diverted via Dumre. Many business transactions there in connection with visits to Kathmandu or Pokhara via bus or the new highway. Social institutions such as the Bhajans (music groups) have dwindled from fifteen to two; one for women, and one for men.



Fig. 34a. Dumre Bazaar - temporary housing on roadside.

Fig. 34b.

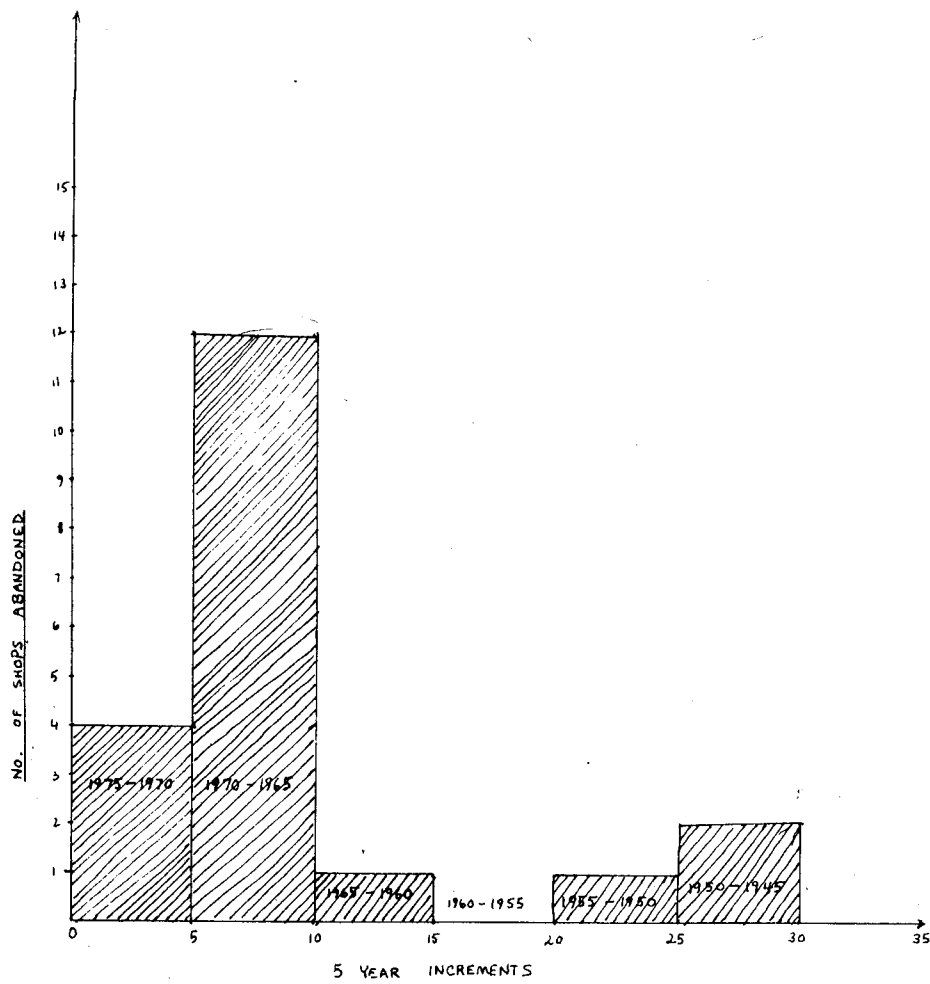
Kumal (potter) rests while selling wares in Damouli (site of new District Headquarters).



Fig. 34c.

Mathura Lal Plya (center) manages his family's 'Cold Drinks' store in Dumre.

Fig. 34. Settlement along the new highway.



The graph shows the migrations occurring in conjunction with the times of greatest geographical and political changes.

Table II. Peak years of migration from Bandipur bazaar.

Fig. 35. New transport.

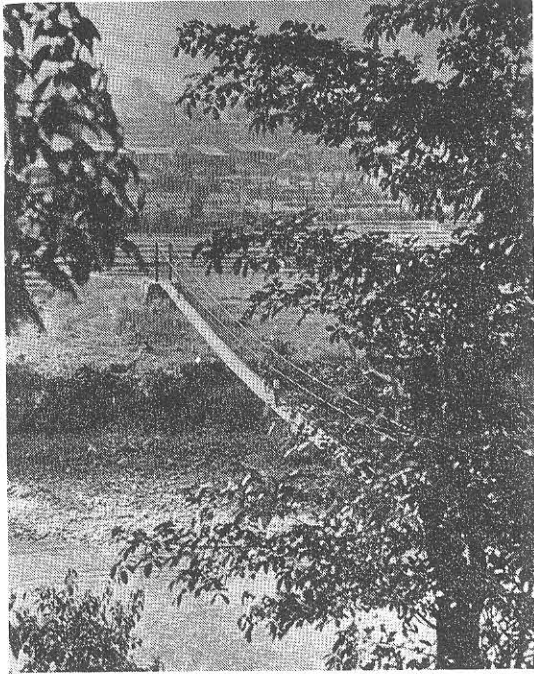


Fig. 35a. New suspension bridge in Bhimalnagar links Gorkha more directly to the new highway.

Fig. 35b. Public buses run daily between Kathmandu, and Pokhara.

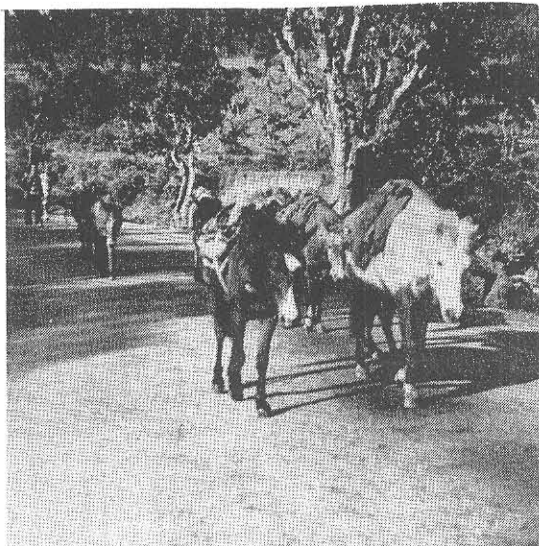


Fig. 35c. Mule trains travel along the new highway through Bhimalnagar.

The small outlying communities around Bandipur which evolved as partially agrarian and partially trade-dependent communities also have suffered from the recent changes. The demand for hired labour from the Bandipur area has gone down sharply. Some communities, which had over the past one hundred years reduced their dependence on farming and developed greater dependence on earnings as porters, have suffered greatly from their new unemployment. Having lost their touch for farming, some families have resorted to gathering wild plants for food, which, without the proper knowledge of identification, has in some cases proved fatal. Others who could make various craft goods as an alternative no longer have a convenient market.

Although the occupational and institutional aspects of life in and around Bandipur have all suffered, the traditional family and friendship ties have not been lost. The Guthi seems to still hold importance. While I was there, seven Guthis celebrated the Guthi Puja, and each celebration was well attended. Families who have parents or relatives still living in Bandipur tend to return for Dasain and various jātras. This includes many of the people in Bimalnagar, Dumre, and even Narayanghat. Even if an entire family has moved to the road, they will return to Bandipur for the colourful festivities. Those who come seem to enjoy the traditional celebrations and participate with devotion. Some families return in time for the all night festival of Khadga Devi on Phulpati (7th day of Dasain) where they set up a temporary shop to sell concessions.

There are, moreover, other remaining attractions in Bandipur. A principal attraction is the good quality high school and middle school. A total of 500 students attended the primary, middle, and high schools in 1980. The rice mills, post office, and hospital also keep a small, but steady, flow of people coming through Bandipur. Newar homes which are still occupied are usually headed by the grandparents, one son's family, and possibly his nieces and nephews. Some families have moved, leaving their children with grandparents while they operate a store on the road or in Narayanghat. Many people feel Bandipur is a good place to raise and educate children; the climate is healthier than the hot humid river valleys or the Tarai, and the schools are convenient.

IV. NEW ADAPTATIONS AND FUTURE PROSPECTS

Bandipur no longer maintains its former status as a trade network center. Newari families and others who were part of this network have in some instances completely moved from Bandipur and re-established themselves variously along the road, at the new district headquarters, north along the Marsyangdi River (e.g., Tarku-ghat, etc.), and mostly in Narayanghat. Others have moved their primary business operations to these more profitable locations,

but still maintain a footing in Bandipur with a secondary business. And many are determined not to sell their holdings. With the decline of commercial trade and administrative activities in the Bandipur area, the remaining people have tended to move closer together. Families in the outer neighbourhoods have moved into Bandipur Bazaar and have rented rooms for low rent, or have become caretakers for families who have moved away.

Today the Bazaar is peaceful, and the sound of walking sticks never fills the night air or early morning hours. However, many people are deeply concerned about the future, and are searching for new ways to stimulate and thus revitalize the community and economy of Bandipur. Community problems and issues are often discussed in Bhajans, and special delegations have been formed and sent to Kathmandu on the behalf of the whole community.

One family in Bandipur has begun export of medicinal herbs and roots which sell for a good profit in India. These are dried and sent to India in shipments from Bandipur (Figure 39). Another family is investigating possibilities of beginning a silkworm industry, and is trying to purchase the proper equipment. Some families are capitalising on their orange tree orchards, which have grown well in the area. The oranges are taken to the road and sold at a good price of 50 paisa - 1 rupee (5 to 10 cents) each. With careful planning and expansion of the cultivation, the sale of oranges could be a good prospect for the future. A goat livestock development project has also been discussed as a possibility, utilizing unplanted land for grazing. Since the time of this study, this project has been initiated.

Slate mining is just beginning to take hold in the area. There are now five slate mines operating on otherwise completely unusable land (Figure 38). Newar families own the mines, and they hire Magars, Brahmans, Chhetris, Sarkis, Kamis, and Gaines for the labour. Some are trained at extracting stone in large sheets for shaping. Others carry the pre-shaped stones down to Bimalnagar where they are bused to Kathmandu or Pokhara. Wages for this portering in 1976 were 25 paisa (2 cents) per stone. The maximum load weight at 70-80 lbs. (about 50 slabs) brought 12.5 rupees (\$ 1.00) per load. Since it takes one hour to make the trip down to Bimalnagar, some people are able to make two trips in one day, earning 25 Rs./day which (in 1976) was more than the average pay for a trekking porter elsewhere who carried a load all day. The slate business is growing (thirty new hirings in a three-month period in 1976), and offers a promising prospect for the future.

Tourism is another option which has been pushed by some, and opposed by others. The views from the park (tundikhel) are extremely beautiful (Figure 40); the walk up from the road is steep but well-built; the Bazaar is quiet and non-hectic; water is



Fig. 37. Bandipur school students in assembly.



Fig. 38b. Gaine settlement in Bandipur.



Fig. 38a. Slate mining below Bandipur.



Fig. 39. Medicinal herbs dry in main bazaar.

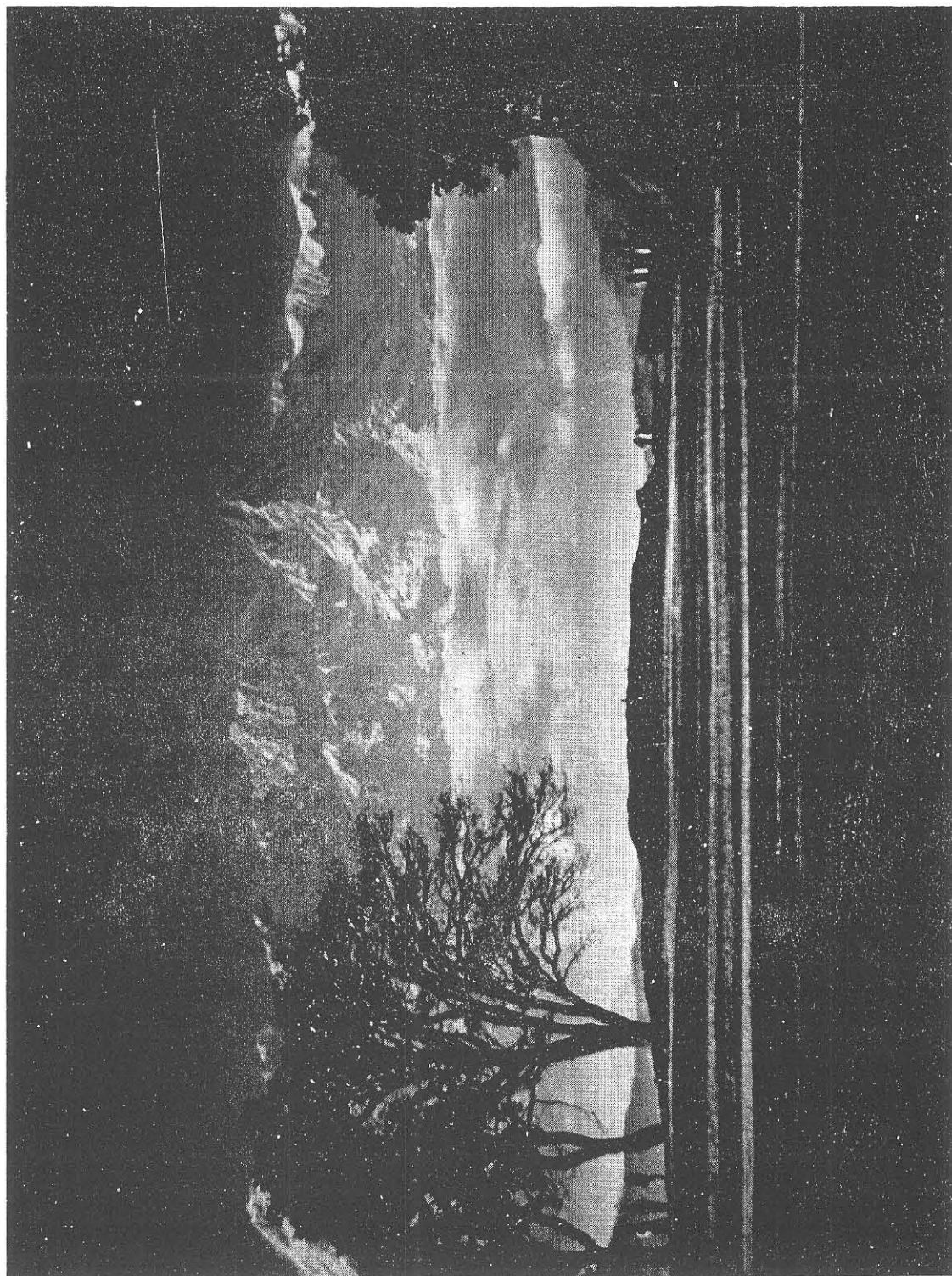


Fig. 40. View from Tundikhel of Bandipur.



andipur.



readily available; and Bandipur makes a good overnight stop en-route between Pokhara and Kathmandu. This last year (1980) construction was begun on a new tourist hotel (Messerschmidt n.d.).

One of the best sources of revitalization in Bandipur has been the continued expansion of its educational facilities. As an educational center Bandipur has done extremely well. Boys and girls from as far as three days walking distance attended Bandipur high school and board with other friends or families, renting rooms in the vacant homes. Since Bandipur is the SLC (School Leaving Certificate) examination center, many students come for three months of study and exams during the winter. Many of the young adult inhabitants in Bandipur today are school teachers, and the operation and maintenance of the expanded school facilities has provided a new source of reliable income. There are some teachers now in Bandipur who wish to open a boarding school. Some Narayanghat families feel that Narayanghat is a bad influence on their youth, and would send their children to Bandipur if such a facility existed. A house has already been donated for this purpose. Since the time this study was conducted (1976), both a two-year nursing college and an arts and science college have been approved and started in Bandipur.¹⁰ Plans are also underway for the construction of a community soccer field.

This past year, two new shops were opened in the Bazaar, and during the new year festival puja, one of the Bandipur families donated a new temple roof and restoration expenses for the main Bazaar temple, Vindu Vāsini. And the main jātras, Phulpati, Tīj, Kṛṣṇa Astami, Bhāg jātra, Siva rātri, Gai jātra, and Lakhe are all still celebrated.

The future of Bandipur may be quite different from its past as a trade network center. Current trends indicate a shift towards its development as an educational, cultural, and tourist center. The important strategy for success in this new identity has been and will continue to be the cooperation between all the people in the community.

Notes

1. This research was part of a directed study project in the Anthropology Dept. at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. The study was guided and encouraged by Prof. John T. Hitchcock, to whom I owe many thanks. I was further encouraged and assisted by Dwarika Shrestha, who made his native home in Bandipur available to me as a place to live. Krishna Lal Pradhan, formerly of Bandipur, has aided me first through several years of language training and subsequently through extensive discussion, evaluation, and supplementary information concerning my research in Bandipur. From August 1975

thru March 1976, I lived with the people of Bandipur, who shared their lives and their hospitality with me, and made my stay the most interesting and worthwhile experience. My sincere thanks go out to all the Bandipur people who contributed their valuable time and knowledge toward making this project possible.

2. It is believed that the person who reaches the state of Siddhi and/or Nirvana is capable of entering or transforming both physically and spiritually into another form or object.
3. In a recent communication, a friend in Bandipur indicated the existence of yet additional versions of the Makunda Sen story.
4. This inscription was copied from the flag by Mathura Lal Piya, of Bandipur Bazaar, in January 1976, and later translated by Krishna Lal Pradhan, at the University of Wisconsin, in December 1976.
5. A maiti is the home of the parents of a married daughter. Throughout Nepal temples are affiliated with each other and assigned kinship relationships to each other. See also Casper J. Miller (1979:18-20).
6. Father Giuseppe, 1801; accounts of Tranquillo as a missionary to Tanahū in 1776 - cited by D.R. Regmi 1969, pp. 32-33.
7. "Bandi" here refers probably to the first appellation of Bandipur. According to local history, Bandipur was named after a respected religious Kāmi, (a caretaker of Khadga Devi temple) named Bandi Kāmi. This was later added on to form Bandipur. I am still investigating a possible relationship between Bandi and the Sanskrit word bandin meaning "bard" or "praise singer."
8. Tola is a measurement of weight equal to about $\frac{1}{2}$ of an ounce.
9. Pāthi is a measurement of volume equal to about $\frac{1}{4}$ of a bushel.
10. Private communication from Krishna Kumar Pradhan, Bandipur, (letter dated 10/80); and from Radhe Shyam Duwadi (letter dated 10/80).

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The Status, Powers and Functions of Rajas and Rajautas During the Nineteenth Century Nepal in the Light of Contemporary Documents

Introduction

Krishna Kant Adhikari *

Before the Gorkhali conquest of Western Nepal between the years 1769 and 1806, there existed some forty-six separate principalities in the Gandaki and Karnali regions. These two regions occupied twenty-four and twenty-two principalities, respectively. These principalities were collectively known as Chaubisi and Baisi Rajyas. In the course of territorial conquest by Prithvi Narayan Shah and his successors, most of these principalities were wiped out. A few of them, which accepted the suzerainty of the Gorkhali rule, were allowed to retain their separate entity, subject to the payment of some kind of tribute and the offer of military services to the Gorkhali rulers in the times of emergency. Important principalities which accepted the overlordship of Gorkhali rule in the process of territorial expansion were: Salyan, Jajarkot, Mustang, Bajhang, Dullu, and Bhirkot.¹ The principalities were not annexed to the new Kingdom of Nepal, primarily because they had actively helped the Gorkhalis against the subjugation of others. It may, however, be noted that Salyan and Jajarkot had accepted the status of vassal states in the life-time of Prithvi Narayan Shah, who, in fact, did not measure sword with these principalities. It is, therefore, to the chieftains of such vassal states that the Gorkhali rulers called Rajas and Rajautas.

The actual number of the Rajas and Rajautas that existed in the period under consideration cannot be ascertained as their number fluctuated from time owing to the creation of new Rajyas and the abolition of the existing ones. Here are a few examples: (1) The principality of Doti, which accepted the overlordship of the Gorkhalis for a brief spell of time sometime in 1789, was afterward annexed to the new kingdom: in 1859 V.S. (Vikram Sambat), i.e. 1802 A.D., it was again created as a vassal state.² (2) Likewise, the principality of Achham, which was once annexed to Nepal, was made a vassal state. (3) The principality of Gulmi, which was given to the Raja of Palpa as a reward for his help to the Gorkhalis during the latter's subjugation of other neighbouring principalities, was allowed to remain as a vassal state after the fall of Regent Bahadur Shah.³ The reason behind the creation of Gulmi as a vassal state was that King Rana Bahadur Shah had married the daughter of the Raja of Gulmi. Sati Prachanda Shah, the Raja of Gulmi, also got some parts of the Tarai which formerly belonged to his domain.⁴ (4) The vassal state of Phalabang seems to have been created only

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in 1894 V.S. (1837), and its ruler was Tej Bahadur Shah.⁵ This was again confirmed in 1904 V.S. (1848) by King Surendra on the succession of a new chief, Narendra Bahadur Shah.⁶ (5) Salyan, which was one of the first principalities to accept Gorkhali suzerainty and belonged to Bilaskumari, daughter of Prithvi Narayan Shah, is stated to have been seized by Prime Minister Bhim Sen Thapa after King Rana Bahadur's assassination.⁷ Afterward it was allowed to retain its former feudatory status; as it figures as an important Rajya in the list of vassal states. In the presence of these documentary evidences concerning the fluctuation of the number of the vassal states, I could gather the names of only eleven Rajyas. One document, prepared in the beginning of Nepal-Tibet War (1854-56), put the number of the vassal states at eight. These are Mustang, Jajarkot, Salyan, Bajhang, Dullu, Achham, Thalahara and Bajura.⁸ In this list, the vassal states of Bhirkot and Doti are not included. A document belonging to the last decade of the 19th century mentions the name of Jageswar Upadhyaya Karki as the Raja of the vassal state of Udayapur, Pyuthan.⁹ Later on, this number seems to have gone up due to creation of more Rajyas. The Rajya Rajauta Ain (Rajya System Abolition Act) of 2019 V.S. (1961) records the Rajas of the following seventeen vassal states: Salyan, Jajarkot, Mustang, Bajhang, Bhirkot, Darna, Bajura, Thalahara, Galkot, Gulmi, Garaukot, Male-neta, Dullu, Parbat, Nuwakot, Khumrikot (Pyuthan), and Udayapur (Pyuthan). Regmi (1963) mentions only fifteen Rajyas.¹⁰ The vassal states of Nuwakot and Udayapur (Pyuthan) do not figure in his list.

Status

From the study of the available contemporary documents, one can discern three categories of Rajyas or vassal states in the 19th century Nepal which continued to exist as late as 1961. These were: (1) Thekka Rajyas, (2) Sirto Rajyas, (3) and, Sarbangamaphi Rajyas. The vassal states of the first type were called Thekka Rajyas because they farmed land revenues on contract (Thekka) basis, and paid the stipulated amount to the central government in installments after meeting all necessary expenses incurred while collecting revenues. Such Thekka or contract was liable to be terminated if the fixed amount was not paid to the government within a time-limit mentioned in the final contract. Achham and Dullu are the examples of Thekka Rajyas.¹¹ The second type of Rajyas, that is Sirto Rajyas, paid an annual tribute called Sirto to the central government and in return enjoyed the land revenues for themselves. The tribute thus paid varied from time to time. For instance, the chief of the vassal state of Mustang paid an annual tribute amounting Rs. 929.00 in 1790 (1847 V.S.);¹² he also presented five horses. But in 1852, he was given an option to pay either Rs. 500.00 or to present two horses.¹³ Besides Mustang, the vassal state of Jajarkot had ac-

cepted the Gorkhali overlordship on payment of annual tribute amounting Rs. 701.00.¹⁴ The Sirto Rajyas "differed from Thekka Rajyas in as much as the government assigned a fixed income to them in addition to make provision for the expences of collection" (Regmi 1963:150).¹⁵ The Sarbangamaphi Rajyas were the most privileged as compared to the Thekka and Sirto Rajyas. As the meaning of the term 'Sarbangamaphi' implies, the chiefs of such type of vassal states enjoyed all kinds of land revenues and other tax-exempt incomes. They could also allocate lands to the tillers for cultivation within the jurisdiction of their Rajyas. But they were not allowed to encroach upon Raikar lands, that is, land owned by the State. They could, however, cultivate barren or waste lands under certain conditions.¹⁶ Salyan and Bajhang are examples of Sarbangamaphi Rajyas.¹⁷ The position of some of the chiefs of this category of vassal states, like the ones mentioned in the preceding sentence, was further enhanced due to matrimonial alliances with the Shah and Rana rulers. When they married the daughters of the Shah and Rana rulers, the chiefs got not only cash dowry but also received extra incomes from tax-exempt lands, such as Kush Birta.¹⁸ (For further detail regarding the number of the vassal states of each category (see Regmi 1963).

Powers and Functions

The principal traditional powers and functions of the vassal chiefs included administration of justice and the collection of revenues. The central government also granted them autonomy in matters like running day-to-day administration within the jurisdiction of their Rajyas. Since the available contemporary documents do not throw much light on this last point, the judicial and revenue collection functions of the vassal chiefs demand special treatment.

Judicial

1. The vassal chiefs possessed powers to hear and decide original cases that came from the people living inside their Rajyas. While deciding cases they had to follow the provisions of the Ain (Legal Code)¹⁹ enforced by the central government. But their power to decide major cases was severely limited. Thus they were not allowed to decide penal cases that fell within the ambit of Pancha Khat,²⁰ i.e., slaying a Brahmin, killing of cow, killing of a woman, killing of a child, and unlawful sexual intercourse, such as incest. In other words, the vassal chiefs could not decide cases of serious nature which carried capital punishment, branding, shaving, and the like.²¹

2. Appeals against the decisions of the chiefs lay either in the nearest district law court or in the district governor, known as Hakim. Likewise, complaints regarding the injustice

meted out by the chiefs to their subjects were heard by the district law court or the district governor. In an order issued in 1930 V.S. (1873) to the judicial functionaries of Doti Adalat (Court), the central government directed them to hand over cases to the chiefs, if the cases were received from the people living within the Sarbangamaphi Rajyas. The order further stated that complaints against the vassal chiefs or against their functionaries were to be heard by the district law court.²² One more example will make this point clearer. In 1951 V.S. (1894), the central government directed the people of the vassal state of Salyan to appeal to the Salyan Adalat against the decision of the chief of that state. If dissatisfied even with the decision of Salyan Adalat, the people could appeal to Palpa Adalat. The final appeal against the decision of Palpa Adalat lay in Sadar Adalat, Kathmandu.²³ Ample references that throw light on the judicial functions of the vassal chiefs are available, though their nature does not differ very much from that of the documents cited above.

3. One major matter allied with the judicial powers and functions of the vassal chiefs was their incomes derived from judicial fines. In the initial stage of political unification of Nepal, the principalities, which were allowed to retain feudatory status pocketed all proceeds realised from different kinds of judicial fines. For instance, Prithvi Narayan Shah, who towards the end of his life is stated to have advised his successors not to use judicial fines for the purpose of the royal palace, gave exclusive right to appropriate the same to the Raja of Jajarkot.²⁴ The documents of the 19th century reveal that ten percent of the fines taken from the people were given to the central government and that the rest (ninety percent) were enjoyed by the vassal chiefs.²⁵

From the nature of the judicial powers exercised by the vassal chiefs in the 19th century, it seems that their position in this regard was in no way superior to that of the village level courts. There are in fact two basic similarities in regard to the judicial powers of the vassal states and the village level courts--the lowest regular judicial unit outside the jurisdiction of the Rajyas. First, after the emergence of Rana rule, particularly after the introduction of the first Ain (Legal Code) in 1854, the village level courts were not allowed to try cases and award punishments that were usually punished by execution, branding, and degradation from caste. Secondly, as in the case of the vassal chiefs, appeals against the decision of the village level courts lay in the district courts.²⁶

Revenue Collection

From the very beginning of their territorial expansion in the Gandaki and Karnali regions, the Gorkhali rulers had adopted the policy of upholding the traditional rights and privileges of the principalities which accepted their suzerainty. Besides other

things, the traditional rights and privileges of the vassal chiefs included revenue administration. More or less the same policy seems to have continued during the 19th century and after. Available evidences shed light on the following main points dealing with the revenue collection powers and functions of the vassal chiefs:

1. Royal charters given to the vassal states at the times of their acceptance of Gorkhali overlordship confirmed the rights and privileges of the chiefs to grant Birta lands to private individuals and to enjoy tax-exempt land revenues for themselves.²⁷ Their rights to grant lands to religious and philanthropic institutions were also confirmed.²⁸ Chiefs who farmed land revenues on Thekka or contract were, however, required to pay land-taxes like Serma and Pota, along with the stipulated amount mentioned in the contract.²⁹
2. Chiefs of all categories could cultivate waste or barren lands and enjoy the revenues of such lands for themselves.³⁰
3. The vassal chiefs held the lands of Jagirdars (civil and military personnels who received lands as Jagir, in lieu of cash payment) on Thekka or contract.³¹ After paying the stipulated amount to the Jagirdars, the balance was appropriated by themselves. Revenues collected by the chiefs on the part of the central government were deposited in the district revenue office, called Mal.³²
4. If the lands of the central government and its employees (Jagirdars) were farmed, probably you are using the term technically. Is so, explain the chiefs were held responsible for the maintenance of water-channels and the improvement of irrigational facilities.³³ They received complaints from the ryots (tenants) and recommended the government for remissions of land taxes, if the harvest was damaged following drought and other natural calamities.³⁴
5. In addition to the collection of land revenues, the vassal chiefs collected and forwarded levies, fees, and taxes, like Chumawan, Gadimubarak, Goddhuwa, Kascharai, etc., to the central government.

Conclusion

Although the vassal chiefs enjoyed many kinds of privileges at the discretion of the central government, a close overview of the powers they exercised and the functions they performed reminds one of some of the characteristics of the medieval feudalism of Western Europe. The following points will illustrate this fact:

1. The central core of the feudal structure is land fief, and it was undoubtedly the major source of the chieftains' income. As stated above, some of the vassal chiefs in Nepal enjoyed not only different kinds of tax-free revenues, but did also allocate lands to the tillers for cultivation.
2. The chiefs held their own courts of justice (howsoever their jurisdiction would have been), imposed fines, taxes and fees, which provided them with substantial source of income.
3. The vassal chiefs were required to render military services to the central government in the event of wars with neighbouring countries (especially Tibet, as Nepal was not in a position to challenge either India or China). The vassal chiefs helped the central government in the third Nepal-Tibet War (1854-56) by supplying recruits and coolies for the transportation of weapons and rations upto the Tibetan border.³⁶ In 1986 V.S. (1929), the Raja of Dullu was ordered to supply recruits and coolies as a war with Tibet was in the offing.³⁷
4. The chiefs, in order to show their fidelity to the Shah rulers, used to attend the central Durbar on such ceremonial occasions, like the coronation of a new ruler, and marriages and Bratabandhas in the royal family.³⁸ On such occasions, they were required to wear special uniforms, as prescribed by the central government.³⁹ They had also to mourn the death of the king or his spouse for full official period fixed for the purpose.⁴⁰
5. Last but not the least, the vassal chiefs were empowered to maintain law and order within their territories. They recruited personnels to run the day-to-day administration, which was allowed to be run in accordance with the traditional customs of the respective states with minimum central control.

Since there was nominal central control over their administration, the chiefs ruled over subjects quite arbitrarily and the grievances of the people were not readily redressed unless brought to the notice of the central government. In 1906 V.S. (1849), the people of some vassal states complained that they had been maltreated by the chiefs in many ways, including physical tortures and imprisonment. The central government acted quickly as soon as the case was brought to its notice. The chiefs were compelled to sign a Muchulka or an agreement to the effect that from the date of their signing the said agreement, they would not maltreat their subjects by any means.⁴¹ It may also be mentioned that in 1910 V.S. (1853) when the central government appointed Thanedars (military or police personnels) in Jajarkot, Bajhang and Thalahara with a view to putting check on the maladministration of the vassal chiefs, the latter vehemently opposed this move, but to no effect.⁴²

The foregoing discussion reveals two significant facts relating to the lack of national integration. First, from the administrative point of view the consolidation of the whole of Nepal was incomplete. Secondly, there was the lack of social cohesion between people living within the territories of the vassal states and the rest of Nepal. In short, the existence of the vassal states as late as 1960, and the provisions made thereafter for the continued enjoyment of the title of Rajss by some former chiefs along with the allowances associated with it, lead one to conclude that the Nepalese society is yet to be free from the feudal chains of the medieval age.

Notes

1. Adapted from; Baburam Acharya, Nepal Ko Samkshipta Britanta, (Kathmandu: 2002 V.S.), pp. 92-118; D.R. Regmi, Modern Nepal, (Calcutta; 1975), Vol. 1, pp. 321-338.
2. Ministry of Foreign Affairs Archives, Nepal (MFAA), Bundle No. 70 (Letter from King Girvan to Pahadi Shahi, Raja of Doti 1859 V.S., Paush Badi 6, Roj 4).
3. D.R. Regmi, op. cit., p. 334.
4. MFAA, Bundle No. 70, 1860 V.S., Bhadra Sudi 8, Roj 5.
5. Yogi Narahari Nath (ed.), Itihas Prakash Ma Sandhipatra Sangraha, (Kathmandu: 2022 V.S.), p. 411.
6. Ibid., p. 419.
7. Francis B. Hamilton, An Account of the Kingdom of Nepal, (New Delhi: 1971), p. 277; Acharya, op. cit., p. 126.
8. Shahi Nepali Jangi Adda, Nepal, 'Bhot Tarfa Ko Rasad Bando-basta Ko', Serial No. 5, Book No. 6, 1911 V.S. (1854).
9. Narahari Nath, op. cit., p. 612.
10. Land Tenure and Taxation in Nepal, (Berkeley: 1963), Vol. I, pp. 150-51.
11. MFAA, Bundle No. 161 (Letter to Colonel Surath Jang Rana Bahadur, 1930 V.S., Falgun Sudi 9, Roj 4); ibid. (Letter to Bhakta Bahadur Shah, Raja of Dullu, 1930 V.S., Chaitra Badi 6, Roj 2); Narahari Nath, op. cit., pp. 562-63.
12. MFAA, Bundle No. 70 (Letter from King Rana Bahadur Shah to Wangyal Dorje, Raja of Mustang, 1847 V.S., Jestha Sudi 5, Roj 4). See also Narahari Nath, op. cit., p. 671 and D.R. Regmi, op. cit., p. 330.

13. MFAA, Bundle No. 22, (Letter from Prime Minister Jang Bahadur to the Raja of Mustang, 1909 V.S. A document of the same year, however, mentions that the central government received Rs. 996.00 and 3 horses as Sirto from the Raja of Mustang. See 'V.S. 1909 Salko Sawal Ko Nakkal', Kausi Tosa Khana, Kathmandu.
14. Acharya, op. cit., p. 93; Narahari Nath, op. cit., p. 4.
15. M.C. Regmi, op. cit., p. 150.
16. Narahari Nath, op. cit., p. 443.
17. Ibid., pp. 407 ff, and p. 582; MFAA, Bundle No. 70, 1858 V.S., Paush Sudi 9, Roj 4.
18. Ibid. (Narahari Nath).
19. Ibid., p. 425.
20. Ibid., p. 435 and p. 439. One document belonging to the period of Prime Minister Juddha Shamsher mentions the power of the chief of Salyan to hear and decide cases relating to Pancha-khat, Ibid., p. 446.
21. Ibid., p. 425.
22. MFAA, Bundle No. 161, (order to the Hakim, Dittha and Bichari of Doti Adalat, 1930, V.S., Falgun Sudi 9, Roj 4). See also a letter from the Commander-in-Chief to Dittha Shri Lal Bhatta, dated 1914 V.S., Jestha Sudi 13, Roj 6, Ibid., Bundle No. 23.
23. Narahari Nath, op. cit., p. 435.
24. Ibid., p. 4.
25. Ibid., p. 417; FMAA, Bundle No. 161, (Letter to Colonel Surath Jang, op. cit., 1930 V.S.).
26. Krishna Kant Adhikari, 'A Brief Survey of the Organization and Structure of Nepali Law Courts, During the Third Quarter of the Nineteenth Century', Contributions to Nepalese Studies, Vol. VI, No. 2, (June 1979), p. 17.
27. Narahari Nath, op. cit., p. 4 and pp. 407-9.
28. Ibid., pp. 395 ff; p. 417 and pp. 460 ff.
29. MFAA, Bundle No. 161, (Letter to the Raja of Dullu, op. cit., 1930 V.S.).

30. Ibid., Narahari Nath, op. cit., p. 443.
31. Narahari Nath; p. 438.
32. Ibid., pp. 413-14.
33. Ibid., p. 414.
34. Ibid., p. 437.
35. Ibid., p. 439 and p. 579.
36. Shahi Nepali Jangi Adda, op. cit., 1911 V.S.
37. Narahari Nath, op. cit., p. 395.
38. Ibid., p. 412, p. 578 and p. 612.
39. Ibid., p. 612.
40. Ibid., p. 420.
41. MFAA, Bundle No. 20, (Letter from General Bam Bahadur to Bhupendra Singh, Raja of Bajhang, 1906 V.S., Magh Sudi 6, Roj 7. For the said Muchulka, see Ibid., V.S. 1906, Paush (data is not mentioned)).
42. Ibid., Bundle No. 22, (Letter from Prime Minister Jang Bahadur to Sardar Kanak Singh Mahat, 1910 V.S. Shrawan Sudi 10, Roj 1).

Recent Economic Changes in a Newar Village

Hiroshi Ishii*

The Kathmandu Valley which has always been a center in the history of Nepal has also been a place where most development efforts have been concentrated.¹ And it is to be expected that considerable economic and social changes have taken place in recent years not only in urban areas but also in rural areas linked to the major cities in the valley.

This article analyzes recent economic changes in a Newar village (here fictitiously called "Satepa") situated about seven kilometers west of Kathmandu. The data were collected at two points in time, first in 1970-71 and later in 1978.

Satepa is a village with a population over one thousand. Except for "temporary residents", all the residents are Newars divided into eight castes. Formerly, agriculture was the people's main source of livelihood but many other occupations have been taken up in recent years. In agriculture as well, there have been changes in production and the organization of labour. Before going into these economic changes, I will briefly discuss some changes in population and landholdings.

Population and Landholding

By the end of 1970, there were 194 households of eight Newar castes as shown below:

<u>Caste Name</u>		<u>Number of Households</u>
<u>(Newari)</u>	<u>(Nepali)</u>	
Barmhu	(Brāhmaṇ)	1
Syesya	(Śhreṣṭha)	63
Jyāpu	(Maharjan)	100
Duīn	(Putuwār)	10
Kau	(Nakarmi)	1
Sāymi	(Mānandhar)	1
Nāy	(Kasain)	17
Jugi	(Kusle)	1

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(The castes here are listed in the order of caste ranking with Barmhu at the top. Duin, Kau and Saymi can be considered as having the same rank).

In seven and a half years, or by the end of August 1978, the total number of households increased to 217, or 11 percent, and the "village population"² increased from 1121 in 1970 to 1371 in 1978, or 22.3 percent.

The members of most of the additional 23 households were related to the original residents through kinship ties. Their residence in independent households followed their remigration into the village or was due to the partition of households. In 1978, there were cases of new in-migrant residents totally unrelated to anyone living in Satepa in 1970, such as single "Bāḍa", "Śreṣṭha", "Kusle" and "Sannyāsi"³ households. These were all "temporary residents" in that they had lived less than half a year before August 1978 and expected to leave the village within half a year.

Though population movement increased to some extent, natural increase was more responsible for the population increase than immigration, as 51 people out-migrated⁴ and 42 people (including "temporary residents") in-migrated within these seven and a half years.

The average number of household members was 6.3 persons per household in 1978 whereas it was 5.8 in 1970. Thus many of the households as well as the village as a whole became congested in these years.

The population and the household increase easily leads us to anticipate a decrease in the size of the landholding per household, given that there was little change in the total amount of the land held by the villagers.

There are various forms of land tenure such as Raikar,⁵ Guthi,⁶ and Bhogbandaki (mortgaging),⁷ tenancy etc. But in this article all the lands, except those cultivated under tenancy, are defined as "held".⁸ So defined, the total amount of land "held" by the Satepa villagers amounted to 1430 ropani in 1970 and 1405 ropani in 1978⁹ showing no significant change in the total amount. But with an increase in the number of households, the average amount of the land per household decreased within these years. It was 7.4 ropani in 1970 but 6.5 ropani in 1978.¹⁰

The distribution of the size of landholdings is shown in Table 1. In this table, I make six divisions in the size of the holdings, namely: no land; 0-5 ropani (not including 5); 5-10; 10-20; 20-30; and 30 and above. The numbers of households which fall in each category are listed caste-wise, with figures for 1970 listed above and those for 1978 listed below in each block.

Table 1: Landholding Distribution by Castes in 1970 and 1978

Area in Ropani	Year	Barmhu	Syesya	Jyapu	Duin	Kau	Saymi	Nay	Jugi	Temporary Residents	Total
0	1970	1	6	11	3	1	-	10	-	-	32
	1978	1	3	10	4	1	-	10	-	3	32
0-5	1970	-	14	35	3	-	1	7	1	-	61
	1978	-	27	48	1	-	-	7	1	1	85
5-10	1970	-	24	29	3	-	-	-	-	-	56
	1978	-	17	34	2	-	1	-	-	-	54
10-20	1970	-	12	19	1	-	-	-	-	-	32
	1978	-	15	19	1	-	-	-	-	-	35
20-30	1970	-	4	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	8
	1978	-	4	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	8
30-	1970	-	3	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
	1978	-	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
Total	1970	1	63	100	10	1	1	17	1	-	194
	1978	1	68	116	8	1	1	17	1	4	217

If we compare the differences in terms of caste, it is clear that households holding more land are most often of higher caste, except Barmhu such as Syesya and Jyapu, even though there are considerable differences of holding within each caste. Among the castes except for Syesya and Jyapu, there was no household which held more than 12 ropani in both 1970 and 1978. Even among the Syesya and Jyapu, many households were found to hold 0 to 5 ropani, i.e., 5 to 10 ropani. In 1978, there were altogether 11 households which had more than 20 ropani or 1 hectare. This is only 5 percent of the total number of households. Only two Syesya households earned rent from leased lands and made it their main source of income in 1970. The number reduced to one household in 1978.¹¹

The overall smallness of the size of landholding is remarkable. In both 1970 and 1978, more than two thirds of the total households held less than 10 ropani (0.5 hectare). 48 percent in 1970 and 54 percent in 1978 held less than 5 ropani (0.25 ha.).

The smallness of holdings was not much compensated for through tenancy. The number of the tenants decreased from 69 in 1970 to 53 in 1978. The total land cultivated under tenancy was slightly more than 200 ropani in 1970 and was slightly less than 200 ropani in 1978. The average areas per tenant were 3.3 ropani and 3.5 ropani respectively. Thus in these years the size of the landholdings changed from "small" to "smaller" while the average household size increased. It is also clear that the lands under tenancy did not add much to the lands already held by the tenants.

In this kind of situation, how did the people manage their subsistence? This was accomplished in two ways:

- (1) through the increase in agricultural production;
- (2) by getting non-agricultural jobs.

Introduction of Improved Seeds

The main crops in this area are paddy, in the monsoon season, and wheat, in the dry season. In the dry season, pulses (bakulā and kaygu) and potatoes are also planted in about a quarter of the cultivated lands. Vegetables are also grown, but not in enough quantity to meet the villagers' needs.

The regular planting of improved crop seeds in this village began in 1965 for wheat and in 1966 for paddy, both with success. In the beginning, both were planted in 2 to 3 percent of the land. The main agency introducing the seeds was the District Agricultural Development Office. With the help of some of the cooperative farmers, JTAs (Junior Technical Assistants) did experimental planting for both paddy and wheat in 1964. In addition, some of the villagers were already using a small amount of improved varieties which they had obtained from farmers in other villages. (This kind of giving and talking or selling and buying of seeds later became very common). Although many kinds of seeds were initially tried, those successfully used were Lerma-52 and Lerma roho (rojo)-64 for wheat, and Taichun-176 for paddy.

In 1970, it was estimated that 60 percent of the total wheat sown was Lerma-52 and 30-35 percent Lerma roho-64.¹² In 1978, there were 62 percent Lerma-64, 29 percent Lerma-52 and 9 percent RR-21. This last was first brought to the village in 1976.¹³

For paddy, Taichun was estimated to occupy 70 percent of the paddy land in 1970 and 84 percent in 1978. In the case of paddy, there remained some traditional "Nepali" varieties because of the following technological as well as cultural reasons. In 1978, there were several traditional kinds, such as Thaptini, Durāj etc. (Thaptini occupied 13 percent of the total paddy in 1978). Customarily, the farmers drain the paddy fields ten to fifteen days before the harvest to dry them up and make them workable. In order to facilitate this procedure (called tiku choyegu) they plant Thaptini or Duraj on the edge of the paddy field of Taichun to make a belt of traditional paddy about one meter wide. As these traditional varieties of paddy ripe earlier, they cut it before the harvest of Taichun and dig a ditch in the belt and let water flow out. Among the traditional kinds of paddy, about two thirds were planted this way. But there were also some people who planted these varieties so that they could plant a kind of horsebean (bakulā), immediately after the harvest of rice.

Difference in the "taste" of various kinds of rice was another reason why some people retained traditional varieties. It was claimed that a flavourful variety called Masino was the most delicious and that Duraj and Mārsi came next. But as the productivity difference was great, and the villagers' taste accordingly changed in favour of Taichun,¹⁴ traditional varieties (except for Thaptini) were only planted by some farmers and these amounted to one percent of the total paddy in 1978. The taste of the recently introduced Pokhara (Pokhreli) Masino¹⁵ was also regarded as good but as its productivity was not as high as Taichun, it only amounted to two percent of the total paddy in 1978.

The increase in the production of wheat and paddy was drastic. Earlier, the production of wheat in good lands was around 1.5 muri per ropani.¹⁶ By 1978, it more than doubled, increasing to 3 or 4 muri per ropani. The production of the traditional kinds of paddy in well-irrigated fields had been around 4 muri per ropani whereas it became about 7 muri with improved seeds. Thus some of the villagers said that people who had not been able to produce enough to eat were now able to produce enough to sell.

The introduction of improved seeds made the use of chemical fertilizers indispensable. The fertilizers were mainly sold to the farmers through a cooperative society. The use of the fertilizers by Satepa villagers increased from about 40 bags in 1965 (for wheat only) and 90 bags in 1966 (for both wheat and paddy) to 750 bags in 1978 (for wheat, paddy, and potatoes) (1 bag contained 50 kg. of fertilizer).

As the use of these fertilizers increased, the villagers worried that the yield per area had gradually decreased and would still decrease. It was also said that the soil became harder as they put more fertilizer into it, and more labour became necessary for tilling the soil of the same acreage. When they saw decrease in the yield, however, they tended to put more chemical fertilizer instead of putting compost, because, as we see in the next chapter, more people were engaged in non-agricultural jobs at this time, and thus had less time for agriculture.

The influence of the chemical fertilizers was also felt in the use of kō and manure. Kō is a fertile soil dug out from underground four to five meters deep and spread out in the field. It was still used in 1970, though only to a limited extent, and had disappeared completely by 1978. The work of extracting kō was done mainly through a type of exchange labour, called bolā. With the termination of the use of kō, bolā exchange in this kind of work came to an end. In other agricultural work also, the decline of bolā exchange was notable. But as this requires a detailed analysis, I deal with it later.

Traditionally, manure was formerly used as one of the ways to enhance the fertility of the soil, but its use has also greatly declined.

With the introduction of the chemical fertilizers arose the necessity for more cash. Now that they could afford to do so, many farmers began to sell a portion of their crops. Those who were unwilling or unable to sell their crops began to look for some other source of cash income in non-agricultural sectors.

The need for cash was also induced by other factors. Formerly it had been possible to thresh traditional paddy by simply pounding a bundle of it against the ground. The improved paddy, however, could only be threshed by using a machine. Thus a threshing machine with a pedal run by foot was introduced. Usually these were made in Kathmandu or in India and brought to the village but some of the more skilful villagers made them themselves. The price of such a machine was around 200 to 400 rupees in 1970 but exceeded Rs. 600.00 in 1978. In 1966, there were only two of these threshing machines in Satepa; in 1970 there were 17 and by 1978 the number increased to 47. Some of these machines were owned privately but some were owned by two to four people in common. Still, as late as 1978, there were many people who did not own any threshing machine. In such a case, a farmer had to borrow a machine at about one or two rupees an hour during a busy season.¹⁷

Further changes took place in agriculture. One was the introduction of a hand-tractor which was bought by one of the Jyapu farmers who got a loan from the Agricultural Development Bank. He not only used it for his own work but also lent it out to others at about 30 rupees per ropani.¹⁸ Besides paddy and wheat, new seeds, such as improved maize in 1967 and improved soyabean in 1975, were introduced. However, the area planted with these seeds was quite limited.

Non-Agricultural Jobs

Even with all the increase in crop yields, it was still not possible to sustain the growing population of the village solely by agriculture. Hence the necessity for non-agricultural jobs arose. As this village is situated close to the road leading from Kathmandu to India, and as it takes only half an hour to reach the capital by bus, most of the jobs were sought and obtained in and around Kathmandu.

These non-agricultural jobs can be roughly divided into the following categories:

- 1) construction work
- 2) commerce and trade
- 3) salaried work
- 4) other.

The kinds of work under each of the above categories, and the number of people engaged in them both in 1970 and 1978, are shown in Table 2.¹⁹

Weaving and animal husbandry also brought a considerable income to a number of households, but I will discuss this separately.

In both years (1970 and 1978), construction work attracted the most people; commerce and trade came next and salaried work third.

The number of people engaged in construction work increased from 77 in 1970 to 101 in 1978, or by 30 percent, which exceeded the rate of population increase in these years.

Most of those who worked in trade or commerce combined these jobs with agriculture. The most remarkable change in this category took place in the number of middlemen handling grain. In 1970, there were ten such grain dealers and their number more than doubled in less than eight years. As the sphere of the purchasing of grain was restricted to a small area around the middlemen's own village, the increase in their number can be attributed to the increase in local agricultural production.

Flour and rice mill was first set up in this village in 1971. Though it was largely motivated by the introduction of electricity in the summer of 1971, it was also related to production increase. By 1978, there were two local rice and flour mills, a baji / chiurā (in Nepali): flattened rice mill and a mill -for all of these three purposes.²⁰ Consequently, most of the middlemen who had had their grain processed in Kathmandu began to use these local mills since they had to carry less of a load to Kathmandu if they did the processing within the village.

These mills also alleviated the daily labour of women who used to grind wheat and pound rice by themselves. But at the same time, the need for cash increased.

Under the title "salaried workers" are included those people who are employed on a permanent basis with fixed wages. These people mainly worked in Kathmandu though a few people found work around the village.

In both 1970 and 1978, more people were employed in governmental or semi-governmental offices²¹ than in private enterprises.²² Among the former, many were clerks of lower rank or office peons. Those with technical skills were scarce (two persons in 1970 and five in 1978).

Table 2: Non-Agricultural Jobs in 1970 and 1978

Job Category	Job	Number of Workers		
		1970	1978	
Construction work	Nayo (leaders), contractors	2	3	
	Carpenters	14	21	
	Bricksmiths	28	33	
	Employees } bricksmiths	6	9	-101
	in NCCN } coolie labourers	*	12	
	Coolie labourers	27	23	
Trade and Commerce	Shops (grocer shops, tea shops, meat-shops) tailor-shops, smithy	11 ⁺	18 ⁺	
	Middlemen of grain	10	21	
	Middlemen of milk	3	7	
	Middlemen of buffaloes	4	1	-63
	Middlemen of firewood	13	13	
	Manufacturer-sellers of curd	13	3	
Salaried work	Employees in gonvernmental & semi-governmental offices	11	24	
	Employees in Nepal Transportation -clerks	4	4	
	Corporation and Salt Trading -coolie labour-)	15	7	-62
	Corporation ers	2	2	
	Teachers	1		
	Soldier	1		
	Employees in private shops, factories etc.	6	19	
	Gardeners	3	2	
	Drivers, conductors		4	
Others	Mill owners	2 [@]	10	
	Hindu priest	1	1	
	Music teacher (private)	1		-12
	Travel guide		1	
Total		177	238	

* I did not make a distinction between the "coolie labourers" and "coolie labourers employed in NCCN (National Construction Company of Nepal)" in 1970. Among the 27 coolie labourers in 1970, there might have been some who were employed in NCCN.

@Mills in 1970 were run by water and were located outside the village though they were owned by Satepa villagers.

+These figures are the numbers of household heads who owned shops and were Satepa residents. Such people who owned shops in Satepa but were not Satepa residents, e.g., two tailors who commuted from outside, are not included in the table.

Among the three main work categories, the rate of increase of the workers was the highest among the wage earners. Most of the salaried jobs were new opportunities to the villagers. Jobs in the Electric Corporation, cooperatives, health projects or panchayats were only recently available since those offices themselves had been created not so long ago. In 1970, two thirds of the salaried workers and four fifths of the government or semi-government employees had had their jobs less than ten years.

The rapid increase in salaried employment continued in the 1970's and the number of the salaried workers increased by fifty percent from 1970 to 1978. This increase mainly occurred among the lower ranking white collar workers, though there was some increase in the number of workers in private shops and in the number of drivers. On the other hand, there was a slight decrease in the number of coolie labourers.

The overall increase in the number of the wage earners was undoubtedly due to the increasing demand for labour in public and private enterprises. On the villagers' side, the small landholding size motivated some people to look for opportunities from outside jobs. At the same time, some people were receiving formal education which later helped them to qualify for certain kinds of employment.

Animal Husbandry and Weaving

The non-agricultural jobs discussed above were mainly sought in and around Kathmandu by men. On the other hand, animal husbandry and weaving were mostly done inside the village by both men and women.

Animal Husbandry

The main domestic animals in this village are water-buffaloes, cows, sheep, goats and fowls. Besides these, a few people raised hogs, geese or rabbits. Buffaloes and cows are mainly raised for their milk. It is well-known that the Newars do not usually use the plough for cultivating the soil, but a few households keep oxen for ploughing. Other animals are kept for meat, eggs or wool.

The seasonal fluctuation in the number of domestic animals is considerable since there are many festivals and other rituals accompanied by feasts in which certain animals are sacrificed or killed for eating.

The approximate numbers of the major domestic animals are shown in Table 3.23. Among all households, about 85 percent in 1970 and 78 percent in 1978 were raising some kind of domestic animals. But this high percentage is mainly due to the large number of house-

Table 3: Number of Domestic Animals and Weaving Machines in 1970 and 1978

Caste	Year	Buffaloes	Cattle	Sheep	Goats	Fowls	Hogs	Weaving Machines
Barmhu	$\frac{1970}{1978}$							
Syesya	$\frac{1970}{1978}$	$\frac{11}{17}$	$\frac{18}{13}$	$\frac{36}{32}$	$\frac{6}{11}$	$\frac{300}{133}$	-	$\frac{26}{54+(3)*}$
Jyapu	$\frac{1970}{1978}$	$\frac{34}{52}$	$\frac{19}{24}$	$\frac{104}{102}$	$\frac{16}{23}$	$\frac{360}{396}$	-	$\frac{45}{70+(2)*}$
Duin	$\frac{1970}{1978}$	$\frac{4}{2}$	$\frac{2}{3}$	$\frac{9}{5}$	-	$\frac{35}{9}$	-	$\frac{1}{2}$
Kau	$\frac{1970}{1978}$	-	-	-	-	$\frac{10}{1}$	-	-
Saymi	$\frac{1970}{1978}$	-	-	-	-	$\frac{2}{1}$	-	-
Nay	$\frac{1970}{1978}$	$\frac{6}{1}$	-	$\frac{7}{19}$	$\frac{4}{1}$	$\frac{35}{29}$	$\frac{5}{22}$	$\frac{6}{4}$
Jugi	$\frac{1970}{1978}$	-	-	-	$\frac{2}{1}$	$\frac{9}{1}$	-	-
Others	$\frac{1970}{1978}$	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	$\frac{1970}{1978}$	$\frac{49}{77}$	$\frac{39}{40}$	$\frac{156}{158}$	$\frac{28}{34}$	$\frac{751}{569}$	$\frac{5}{22}$	$\frac{78}{130+(5)*}$

* Figures in parentheses indicate the number of electric weaving machines.

holds raising domestic fowls. The number of households raising large animals was not great in either year.

There is little difference in the number of livestock per household. In 1978, the maximum number of buffaloes in one household was 4 and among the total of 57 households raising buffaloes, 42 (74 percent) raised only one buffalo. This was also the case for most of the other animals.

However in 1978 one Jyapu household began an extensive poultry raising programme with 150 chickens. As bank loans became available, other people began similar projects in 1978. But in spite of this, there was an overall decrease in the total number of fowls.

In the case of other animals, a slight increase can be seen in the total number. This increase, however, did not exceed the rate of increase in the human population except in the case of buffaloes. Buying buffaloes has been recently encouraged by the loans offered for this purpose by the Agricultural Development Bank.

In all, however, there was a slight decline in animal husbandry between 1970-78.²⁴

Weaving

In contrast to animal husbandry, weaving has been gaining importance in this village. Formerly, it was done on a handloom called bātāngā or chetāngā on which the woof was put through by hand and the warp was moved up and down by stepping on the pedals. As stronger cloth could be woven on the bātāngā, it was still used by some women despite its slow weaving speed. These women were mostly of the Jyapu caste because the bātāngā was good for weaving hākugu parsi (women's waist-cloth with a red hem) worn mostly by Jyapu women.

A loom with a flying shuttle was introduced around 1940, and it rapidly replaced the bātāngā.²⁵ The new loom is called tān and has a speed fifteen to twenty times faster than a bātāngā. The tān made it possible for people to weave more cloth than was needed in their household. It was estimated that the number of tān was about 10 in 1960 and 20 in 1965. It increased to 78 by 1970 and 130 by 1978.

Though two thirds of the households owning tān used to sell some cloth from time to time, few made weaving their major source of income in 1970. But weaving grew to be one of the important sources of income, and in 1978, 19 households were depending on weaving as a secondary source of income.

Weaving machines run by electricity were introduced from 1977, and five households were using them in 1978. These machines were four or five times faster than the common tān and after their introduction, many young men began to engage in weaving even in the busy agricultural seasons.

Another newly introduced technique was the weaving of dhākā (a cloth with minute patterns made by the use of multi-coloured threads woven in one woof line). This technique was brought to this village in 1975 by a widow who returned to this village from Tansen (a town in Palpa district). Though the weaving of dhākā is time-consuming, it gradually spread among the villagers since it could be woven on an ordinary tān and sold at a good price. By 1978, six people (four girls and two boys) had learned how to make dhākā and some were weaving it everyday.

Thus, through the introduction and increase of the tān and electric weaving machines and with the spread of the technique for making dhākā, it became possible for a considerable number of people to earn a good income within the village.

Combination of Jobs

So far, we have looked at agricultural and non-agricultural jobs separately. However, these two were combined in many households. It was common for men to leave light agricultural labour to women and old people in order to work in Kathmandu. But in these cases the men would take leave from their work for several days so that they could conduct agriculture in busy seasons.

Table 4 shows how agricultural and non-agricultural jobs were combined in each caste in 1970 and 1978. In this table, weaving and animal husbandry, though extensively done, are omitted from "non-agricultural jobs." But if we include them in the non-agricultural work, the number of households combining the two increases.

From Table 4, it is clear that the number of households which depended solely on non-agricultural jobs is few despite the large number of non-agricultural workers shown in Table 2.

Among the non-agricultural households are included two that earned their living solely by their traditional caste specific services e.g. a Barmhu (Hindu priest) and a Kau (blacksmith).

It is notable that the number of non-agricultural households is smaller than the number of households with no land. This is explained by the fact that someone with no land could make agriculture his main source of income by renting-in lands or by working as a daily-paid agricultural labourer on another's land.

Table 4: Caste-wise Occupational Distribution in 1970 & 1978

	Number of Agricultural Households		Number of Households Combining Agriculture and Other Jobs		Number of Non-Agricultural Households	
Caste	Year 1970	1978	1970	1978	1970	1978
Barmhu					1	1
Syesya	15	15	44	49	4	4
Jyapu	35	27	63	86	2	3
Duin	2	2	7	6	1	-
Kau	-	-	-	-	1	1
Saymi	-	-	1	1	-	-
Nay	-	1	13	15	4	1
Jugi	1	1	-	-	-	-
Temporary Residents	-	-	-	1	-	3
Total	53	46	128	158	13	13

The importance of agriculture has remained great as over 90 percent of the total households were more or less engaged in agriculture in both 1970 and 1978. Nevertheless, "pure" agricultural households became fewer in number than those combining agriculture with other jobs. In 1978, 73 percent of all the households combined both, whereas in 1970, only 66 percent did so. These figures also reflect an increase both in the number and in the proportion of households with combined occupations.

Changes in Agricultural Labour Recruitment

Three Types of Labour Recruitment

In this society, there are three systems for recruiting agricultural labour from outside one's own household. These are bolā, gwāli and jyāmi.

Traditionally, bolā was the most popular way of recruiting labour. It is a system of labour exchange in which a certain amount of labour is reciprocated by the equivalent amount of labour. There are two kinds of bolā. One is here called "group bolā" and another "unstructured bolā."

In a group bolā, a group of people (sometimes up to 10 or even more are organized. The members of a bolā group (bolā khala) rotate work in each member's field. Until the work is finished, no one is allowed to work in non-members' field. If members remain on good terms, they can continue the group longer than one farming season.

Members of bolā groups are usually male, but in the rice planting season many women are also included. However, women are only loosely attached to the bolā group and the female labour is only counted as half that of males.²⁶

Most commonly only one person from one household is in a bolā group. But if two men from one household join the group, the group members work for a double number of days in their field.

If a bolā member fails to come for work in another member's field, he has to pay a cash compensation equal to the payment to a hired agricultural labourer. These calculations are done at the end of each main agricultural season. At the end of the rice harvest, a feast called Bolākhu bhwe is held by each bolā group. The date of this feast is fixed by village elders for the entire village and the bolā members not only enjoy the feast but clear all their accounts on the same day. In other seasons no date is fixed for the calculations of bolā.²⁷

In contrast to the "group bolā", no on-going group is formed in the case of "unstructured bolā". Here two or more persons merely agree to exchange their labour. The work is done on agreed days, and in between the participants can work freely in other people's fields. The bolā relation in this case can be multilateral. For example, a person A may practice bolā with a person B and B with another person C. But it is not necessary for A to have any bolā relationship with C whereas in the case of the group bolā, all of A, B and C compose one group.

Those who come into a bolā relationship are usually neighbours. As the bolā members have to work in each other's field day by day, it is not convenient to have a person living far from the village in a group. Often a core of a bolā group is organized by patrilineal kinsmen who may call in a few neighbours and friends. But it is not obligatory for patrilineal kin to practice bolā together.

Labour can also be recruited through gwali. The word "gwali" means "help" in various contexts. In relation to labour recruitment, it is used to denote an offer of labour in return for which no direct compensation is expected. Though bolā is practiced mainly in agricultural work, gwali is given not only in agricultural work but also in work such as the pounding of baji (flattened rice), manufacture of liquor and the drying of grains, all of which are usually done by women. The number of people working as gwali labourers in a farm at one time is quite small compared to other types of labourers.

In contrast to the bolā which is ordinarily exchanged within a village, the gwali is often practiced among affines living in different villages. Moreover, the gwali is more frequently given by married out daughters, accompanied by their husbands and children, when she visits her parents' household. Gwali is also practiced among fictive kin, twāy (mit in Nepali), e.g. friends or neighbours, but this is limited to minor domestic work.

The third type of labour recruitment is jyāmi. Literally, "jyami" means "a worker (or workers)". But the villagers' concept of jyāmi includes only two kinds of workers. One is a daily paid coolie labourer who works in the construction of roads, houses, etc. The other is an agricultural labourer hired on a daily basis. The latter might be called "agricultural jyāmi", but as I am dealing only with agricultural workers here, I will use the word "jyāmi" to refer exclusively to them.

Jyāmi are recruited both from inside and outside the village, although formerly they were mainly sought within the village. Not only the landless people but also members of some well-to-do households are recruited as jyāmi. However, those who depend most heavily on the income from jyāmi work are those who have little or no land.

In 1978, about a half of all the households in the village had some members who had worked as jyāmi in the preceding year, and in nearly half of these cases, household members had worked as jyāmi only very rarely.

Change in the Labour Situation

In recent years, the means of recruiting agricultural labour has changed considerably, mainly because of an inflow of seasonal agricultural labourers from the hills west of the Kathmandu Valley. This inflow was stimulated by the opening of a bus service following the completion of the road (Prithvi Rāj Mārga) connecting Pokhara with Kathmandu in 1973. Those people who had to walk one or two days from their homes in the hills can now come to Kathmandu in one to three hours by bus. Moreover, busy agricultural seasons

in the hills differ from those in the Kathmandu Valley. Thus it has become easy for those hill people in need of more income to come to the valley for work at a time when they have less work at home.

In 1978, the period of their stay varied from a few days to a few months. Almost all of those who came for work were males of various jāt (ethnic groups and castes) such as Tamang, Gurung, Magar, Newar and Chhetri. They would come with minimum personal belongings and stay in some of the public shelters, phalchā (pāti in Nepali), or in the house of the landlord who hired them. If such person was hired he was fed three times, including baji (a heavy snack taken around noon in the field), and paid about six rupees a day in the busy season in 1978. In the case of a jyāmi who had his own home in or nearby village, he was paid twelve rupees because he ate at his home twice and had to be fed by the landlord only once.²⁸ The amount of the payment fluctuated from season to season or even within one season. In the beginning of a season when there was less demand for labour, the daily wage even went down to half that of the peak labour period. Women were paid half the amount given to men.

Though there were several jāt among those agricultural labourers coming from outside the valley, the villagers generally referred to them as sē. The Newari word "sē" is usually translated as "bhotē" in Nepali. In the villager's use of the word "sē", however, not only the Tibetans but also other Mongoloid groups in Nepal (except for the Newar themselves) are included, although when I asked some of the villagers what particular jāt the sē were, the most common answer was that they were Tamang. This may be due to the fact that the Tamang have been the most numerous group among the sē around the Kathmandu Valley and therefore were in frequent contact with the villagers here. But when I asked some of the jyāmi themselves about their jāt, names of several other jāt such as Magar, Gurung or even Chhetri were also given. Thus, it is clear that Satepa villagers used these terms not actually knowing the jāt of all the jyāmi. In fact, the villagers' interest was not in the jāt of the jyāmi but in their role as labourers.²⁹

In 1970, when the Kathmandu-Pokhara road was not yet completed, there was no substantial source of jyāmi in the hills to the west of the valley. There was only the Kathmandu-Birgunj road along which only a few large settlements could be found. Therefore, even in the busiest season in 1970 or in 1971, I found only a few jyāmi from outside working around Satepa.

In 1978, out of 190 farming households in this village, only 4 percent had been using jyāmi from outside the valley for more than ten years. 66 percent said that they began using them in their fields within the previous ten years (most commonly within

five to six years). Even in 1978, 31 percent of the farming households were not hiring them at all.

On 18th October, 1978, I counted 95 jyāmi from outside the valley working in the fields of Satepa villagers for the rice harvest. The total population of those who came to Satepa as jyāmi from outside the valley in one season likely exceeded one hundred.

In the evenings of the busy season in 1978, the village squares and lanes grew crowded with the agricultural labourers coming back from the fields. They would curiously look into the houses of those who were weaving or would gather together around the image of Buddha or in tea shops, which sometimes turned into labour markets for people looking for the next day's work and the villagers in search of labourers.

As discussed, there were a considerable number of people who did not hire any jyāmi from outside. There were various reasons for this. If the size of the landholdings was small or if one had enough household members to meet the need for labour in one's own field, it was not necessary to hire any jyāmi, or if one practiced bolā, he might not need them. But along with these alternatives, dislike of sē was one of the reasons why some of the people did not hire jyāmi from outside. Even those who depended on sē claimed that the sē were lacking in agricultural skills by Newar standards. In particular they were not used to using the ku (kodāli in Nepali), a short handled hoe popular among the Newar. Sometimes landlords had to teach the sē how to handle the ku properly.

On the other hand, the jyāmi recruited within the village were usually considered to be more reliable. One woman told me that if she hired sē, she could not leave them unsupervised because the work might not get finished, whereas if she hired jyāmi from her village, she could expect better work.

Despite these attitudes, jyāmi from outside were widely resorted to around 1978 because by hiring them landlords could have their field work completed much more quickly. Formerly, when they were dependent on bolā, and a limited number of jyāmi within the village, farmers had to wait for some days before the bolā group came to their fields. Often this led to a delay in certain important tasks which again caused a delay in the next agricultural process. This problem was solved by the inflow of the large number of labourers from outside. Thus by 1978, one person even commented that one might lose his dignity (ijjat wani) if he failed to get his field work done quickly. Besides, many of the villagers were already willing to accept jyāmi from outside because they had their own non-agricultural jobs. Before, the landowners who commuted to Kathmandu had to take leave from their work in the busy agricultural

seasons in order to take care of their own farms as well as to co-operate in bolā. But after the labour inflow, villagers were more apt to go back to their work in the city than to remain in the village for agricultural work.

Thus the number of people practicing bolā decreased considerably. In 1978, among 190 farming households, 60 percent said that the number of the bolā labourers in their fields had decreased, especially since the inflow of sē. Among the rest, 15 percent said that they had rarely practiced bolā anyway.³⁰ Twenty-five percent were heavily dependent on bolā in busy seasons though they might supplement this labour by hiring a few jyāmi.

It should be noted that the type of bolā found in 1978 was mainly an "unstructured bolā." In 1971, I found more than twenty bolā groups (bolā khala) in which the members worked together and held feasts at the end of the season. But I could only find one bolā khala in the rice-planting season as well as in the harvest in 1978.

In the rice-planting season, less labour change was observed. As it was only women who planted rice seedlings, and as women in this village did not have jobs in Kathmandu, women's work was done by "unstructured bolā" as it had been in the former days.

The number of Satepa villagers who worked as jyāmi also decreased between 1970-1978. The number of households that relied on jyāmi work as their primary source of income decreased from seven to four from 1970 to 1978.

Conclusion

The Kathmandu Valley is one of the places in Nepal where the introduction of improved seeds has been successful. But as seen here, it took place in a context where the average landholding size per household was small and the rate of population increased high. Because of these factors, it became increasingly necessary for people to seek some sources of income in non-agricultural sectors even given the increase in agricultural production. People in the village discussed here were favoured by the closeness to the capital as it offered them outside job opportunities. Still, many of their jobs were temporary and could be easily withdrawn if the economic condition of the capital were to decline. In this sense, the village economy became more dependent on the economic condition of the nation or even beyond and hence vulnerable to change in the outside world.

Agriculture also became vulnerable to external conditions. As the improved varieties of crops cannot be satisfactorily grown without using imported chemical fertilizers, any decline in their

import will have a disastrous effect on production. The situation is difficult for Nepal as she suffers a lack of marketable export goods and has to depend heavily on foreign aid.

The involvement in the cash economy is an irreducible trend. It was brought about both through the increase in agricultural production and in the employment in the non-agricultural sectors which made cash more accessible and at the same time more necessary. The use of fertilizers made payment in cash indispensable and the contact with the city required more cash as it created new incentives for consumption. More and more radios, tape-recorders, or fashionable clothes can be seen in the village, especially among the younger generation.

As for population movement, it is noteworthy that not only the city of Kathmandu but also the surrounding rural area attracted many people from outside. Out of the sample survey of the in-migration pattern in Kathmandu urban areas, Thapa and Tiwari (1977) concluded that most of the in-migrants were literate, being either students or working in non-agricultural sectors such as government and private services, business, etc.³¹ Combining their study with ours, we can point out three kinds of centripetal human flow in and around the Kathmandu Valley. The first is the inflow of a literate population from all over Nepal to Kathmandu, which Thapa and Tiwari discuss. The second is the commuting population from rural areas in the valley to urban areas. Among them, both literate and illiterate people are found. The third pattern is the temporary inflow of mainly uneducated labourers from outside to rural areas in the valley. They filled the deficiency of the rural labour force caused by the population commuting to the city for work.

Change in the rural labour recruitment system was inevitable under these circumstances. In effect, bolā was largely replaced by iyāmi because of the labour inflow facilitated by the road construction. However, it would not have been possible for the incoming labour force to be employed if it were not for the favourable economic conditions of those who employed them. At the moment, the demand and supply of the labour force seems to be fairly well balanced. Thus in this area of Satepa, by the time the agricultural labourers came in mass, villagers had cash in hand and were short of labour. They were able as well as compelled to hire more iyāmi to maintain their agricultural activities. The decline of the bolā system was thus a direct consequence of the recent economic and demographic changes in the area.

In this paper, I did not deal with the social consequences of the economic changes in this village. But with the decline of the bolā system, which in itself is a part of the weakening of intra-village cooperation, there have been significant social

repercussions. But these kinds of changes should be dealt with elsewhere in detail.³²

Notes

1. Pant, 1975:17.
2. I calculated the population as of December 31, 1970 and August 1, 1978. Criteria of "village population" are as follows:
 - i) In the cases of households with some of their family members living outside as students, government employees or other kinds of workers, I have included in the "village population" only those outside residents who were either unmarried or who had wives remaining in Satepa.
 - ii) Temporary residents have also been included in the "village population."
 - iii) Two health-post employees staying in Satepa in 1978 who were of Syesya and Po(Poḍe) castes who were unmarried and unrelated to other villagers have been excluded.
3. The names to which I have put quotation marks were given by temporary residents themselves. But Satepa villagers doubted the real caste status of "Bada" and "Srestha" and said that they might be "sē". (About sē, see the section on labour recruitment).
4. Among those who out-migrated are included those married males with their nuclear families who were still considered to be the same family members of some village residents. At the time of out-migration, these people numbered twenty.
5. Raikar lands are the "lands on which taxes are collected from individual landowners, traditionally regarded as state-owned." (Regmi, 1976: 234).
6. Guthi lands are the lands endowed "for any religious or philanthropic purpose." (Ibid., 234).
7. Bhogbandaki is a system under which creditors cultivate the mortgaged lands instead of taking interest.
8. The same measure was adopted in Ishii, 1978: 509. Raikar lands, Guthi lands, lands taken in mortgage and leased lands are considered as "held". A very small amount of land was still listed as Birtā in the land record, but I consider the cultivators of these Birtā lands as "holders" of them.

9. 1 ropani = 0.05 hectare. This slight change was due to the selling and buying of lands, losing of lands in litigation and in- and out-migration of some of the landholders.
10. I include all the households in the village in the calculation of these average figures whether they were holders of land or not.
11. There were 23 households in 1970 and 18 in 1978 which let out a part of their lands. But in most of them the rent from those lands constituted a smaller portion of their income.
12. I made the estimate for 1970 by asking a score of villagers, village panchayat's secretary, officers in the district agricultural development office and officers in the cooperative society. In 1978, I got the figures of the areas sown or planted to each crop from every household in the village.
13. Lerma-64, 52 were brought from Mexico, Taichun from Taiwan and RR-21 from USSR.
14. People said that they were getting more and more fond of Taichun because they became used to it.
15. It was first brought to this village in 1973 by some of the villagers from a nearby village.
16. 1 muri = 90.9 liters. Among the improved wheat, RR-21 yielded most, Lerma-64 came second and Lerma-52 third.
17. The rate depended upon the size of the machine. Some people did not count by hours but took the amount equal to one day's wage for a male per day. The rate also changed in the lapse of years: it was a half rupee to one rupee per hour in 1970 and around two rupees in 1978.
18. The rate fluctuated from season to season or even within a season. The rent given here is the rate in the rice planting season in 1978.
19. The figures given for the total in this table for 1970 partly differ from what I had given in another article (Ishii, 1978) mainly because I included in the present table the manufacturers and sellers of milk products such as dhau (dahi in Nepali: curd) in non-agricultural work.
20. In 1978, two rice and flour mills were owned by two Syesya and five Jyāpu respectively. One flour-rice-ciura mill was owned by two Syesya and one ciura mill by one Syesya.

21. Some villagers worked in some of the government offices such as tax offices or village panchayts. A considerable number of people were employed in the offices related to health projects such as leprocy control.

Semi-governmental jobs were those in the Electric Corporation, schools, hospitals, university offices, cooperative societies, the Nepal Transportation Corporation and the Salt Trading Corporation. In Table 2, I list the latter two Corporations in a different column because besides white collar workers, there were many people in these Corporations who worked as coolie labourers. The numbers of these are listed separately.

22. All the private enterprises in which Satepa villagers were working were very small in size. They were: tea shops, milk shops, grocer shops, a welding factory, a carpet factory, and rice-flour mills.
23. It took more than a month to collect the figures on domestic animals but no correction was made for giving the figures at one point of time.
24. This statement could not be negated even if the seasonal fluctuation of livestocks were taken into account as the counting was done around December (a season after big festivals when animals were expected to be fewer) in 1970 and around May-June (a season before big festivals) in 1978.
25. A tān could either be purchased in Kathmandu or made by some of the skilful carpenters within the village. It was 200 to 300 rupees around 1970 and about 600 rupees in 1978.
26. This makes a clear contrast to the Parbate system of parma in which female labour and male labour are counted equally.
27. At the end of the rice planting season, a date is fixed for holding a feast called Jhārkha bhwe. This feast is held in each household and it is not necessary to clear the bolā account of the season on this day.
28. This was a rate for a male jyāmi in 1978. In 1970, it was five rupees a day for a male recruited within the village.
29. If villagers found that a jyāmi is a Chhetri, they ceased to refer to him as sē. Instead, they used the word "khay."
30. The main reasons were: the smallness of household, small landholding size and outside jobs.

31. Thapa and Tiwari, 1977: 41-45, 68-71, 91-96.
32. In another paper (Ishii, 1978) I analyzed an aspect of the decline of the inter-caste relationships which took place before 1971.

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Some Stress Placement Rules in Maithili

Ramawatar Yadav**

1. Introduction

Maithili, like most Indo-Aryan languages, is a stress language. However, stress in Maithili is far weaker than in English. Vowel reduction in unstressed positions is not as great in Maithili as in English. Also, stress in Maithili is less significant, playing only a marginal role in distinguishing words.

This paper will review some of the proposed stress-assignment rules for Maithili and then attempt to rewrite the stress placement rules in the light of data provided in Trail (1973). (For information on probable acoustic correlates of word stress in Maithili, see Yadav 1980).

2. Previous Studies

The earliest study of word stress in the Indo-Aryan languages, including Maithili, is that of Grierson (1895a) wherein he argued that these languages:

closely follow the rules of Sanskrit stress-accent (as distinct from the ancient musical accent)... The only difference is that IAV's (Modern Indo-Aryan Vernaculars) do not usually throw the accent further back than the antepenultimate if the word ends in a long syllable. (p. 139)

Grierson's (1895b, 1896) later studies also reiterate the same position.

In his earliest study (1941), S. Jha mentions word stress only briefly, but later (1958) he discusses stress in modern Maithili at greater length and offers the following stress-placement rules:

- (i) Words of one syllable have their vowels always stressed.

* This study forms part of Chapter V of Yadav 1979.

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- (ii) In words of two syllables, the penultimate, i.e., the initial vowel gets the accent.
- (iii) But if the final vowel is long and the initial, short, the final vowel has the accent.
- (iv) In words of three syllables, if all the vowels are short or the penultimate is long, the penultimate bears the stress.
- (v) If the penultimate is short and the final, long, the final syllable bears the accent.
- (vi) If the other syllables are short and the ante-penultimate vowel, long, the latter bears the stress.
- (vii) As stress cannot be thrown further back than the third syllable from the end the rules of accentuation in words of three syllables hold good in words of more syllables also. (pp. 59-60)

The crucial problem with most of these previous studies, including those of Grierson, is that these are highly impressionistic. In particular, Grierson's (1895a, 1895b, 1896) studies are especially open to serious objections for the simple reason that he placed all the new Indo-Aryan languages under the same stress rules and it is not clear how large a sample he used in the ten or eleven languages he investigated. Furthermore, the stress-placement rules proposed by previous studies are based heavily on literary spelling rather than actual pronunciation -- a puristic bias to keep the pronunciation closer to Sanskrit is easily noticeable. Also, previous writers have tended to confuse stress with vowel length. For instance, to most of S. Jha's (and of Grierson's) stress-placement rules, vowel length is crucial. However, vowel length is known to be non-phonemic in Maithili. Consequently, the basic premise of these stress rules is untenable.

3. Location of Stress

Trail's (1973) word list of approximately 1700 words has been used for this preliminary distributional study of the position of primary word stress in Maithili.

Monosyllabic

All monosyllabic nouns, pronouns, adjectives and verbs are always stressed, e.g.,

['i]	'this'
['ke]	'who'
['mac ^h]	'fish'
['d ^h il]	'louse'
['paik ^h]	'wings'
['nik]	'good'
['leb]	'to take'
['deb]	'to give'
['k ^h əb]	'to eat'

Disyllabic

All disyllabic verbs in Trail's List and a great majority of disyllabic nouns, pronouns and adjectives (approximately 75%) receive stress on their penultimate, i.e., the initial syllable. Trail (1973) did not include inflected causative verb forms which may receive stress on the ultimate syllable. Examples:

['bəhut]	'a lot'	['kərəb]	'to do'
['ədmi]	'man'	['piəb]	'to drink'
['bekti]	'individual'	['sutəb]	'to sleep'
['t ^h ehun]	'knee'	['ladəb]	'to load'
['ēri]	'heel'	['kaʔəb]	'to cut'
['k ^h opri]	'hut'	['pōʔa]	'nasal mucus'

[kə'ʔa]	'(imp) cause to cut'
[hə'ʔa]	'(imp) cause to move; remove'
[lu'ʔa]	'(imp) cause to rob'
[b ^h ə'ja]	'(imp) cause to exchange'
[p ^h ə'sa]	'(imp) cause to entangle'
[lə'da]	'(imp) cause to load'

The remaining 25% of the disyllabic nouns, pronouns and adjectives have stress on the last syllable,

[bi'rar]	'land fit to grow seedlings'
[kə'rej̃]	'heart'
[k ^h ə'k ^h ar]	'sputum'
[bo'k ^h ar]	'fever'
[kə't ^h or]	'hard'
[gə'rib]	'poor'
[gə'rur]	'a bird'
[g ^h ə'mənd̪]	'pride'
[bi'laĩ]	'cat'
[lə'raĩ]	'war'
[ke'raõ]	'beans'
[mir'čaĩ]	'hot pepper'
[čə'taĩ]	'mat'

Tentatively, it may be concluded that the disyllabic nouns, pronouns and adjectives of Maithili normally receive stress on the ultimate syllable when the ultimate syllable is either closed, i.e., ends in a consonant or a cluster of consonants, or ends in a sequence of vowels--which is diphthongized in surface phonetic forms. There are, however, exceptions, e.g.,

['bəhut]	'a lot'
['t ^h ehun]	'knee'

Trisyllabic

Nouns, Pronouns and Adjectives

The majority of trisyllabic nouns, pronouns and adjectives (approximately 75%) receive stress on the penultimate syllable. Examples:

[kən'pət̚ti]	'temple (of the head)'
[kət̚ ^h 'k ^h od ^h i]	'woodpecker'
[b ^h əg'jogni]	'firefly'
[ən't̚ ^h anbe]	'ninety-nine'
[un'čalis]	'forty-nine'
[kən'bəlla]	'earrings'

However, a number of trisyllabic nouns, pronouns, and adjectives (approximately 18%) receive stress on the antepenultimate, i.e., the first syllable, e.g.,

[bər ^h iyā]	'better'
[duniyā]	'world'
[dəhina]	'right'
[tər ^h iya]	'petticoat'
[muk ^h iya]	'leader'
[nariyər]	'coconut'
[d̚ ^h aluwa]	'steep'
[bastəbik]	'true; real'

A few trisyllabic nouns, pronouns and adjectives (approximately 7%) receive stress on the ultimate syllable. Examples:

[hosi'yar]	'alert'
[čəmət'kar]	'skill'
[bəru'war]	'strong'
[əsən'tok ^h]	'dissatisfaction'
[guri'əl]	'wrapped up'

Verbs

Most trisyllabic verb infinitives, including causal infinitives, receive stress on the penultimate syllable, e.g.,

[k ^h i'harəb]	'to chase'
[ni'k ^h orəb]	'to clean (vegetable, grain, etc.)'
[nəŋ'raeb]	'to limp'
[k ^h ə'k ^h arəb]	'to clear throat'
[b ^h ə'gaeb]	'to drive away'
[bi'yaeb]	'to give birth'
[hu'laeb]	'to pen up (animals)'
[u'k ^h arəb]	'to uproot'
[kə'ṭaeb]	'to cause to cut'
[hə'ṭaeb]	'to remove'
[lə'daeb]	'to cause to load'
[p ^h ə'saeb]	'to cause to entangle'

There are, however, some exceptions, e.g.,

['pəhũčəb]	'to arrive'
['nihurəb]	'to bend'

What is worth noting is that such trisyllabic verbs receive stress on the same syllable as do their stems, e.g.,

'pəhũč -	'arrive'
'nihur -	'bend'

Polysyllabic

Nouns and Adjectives

Almost all Maithili nouns and adjectives of four syllables have stress on the third syllable from the end, i.e., on the antepenultimate, e.g.,

[bəm'reṭiya]	'left-handed'
[nə'čəniyã]	'dancer'

[u'pədrəbi]	'naughty'
[mə'jakiya]	'humorous'

There are, however, some exceptions. For instance, a small number of quadri-syllabic nouns and adjectives -- mostly borrowings -- receive stress on the penultimate syllable. Examples:

əgər'bətti	'incense' (Hindi borrowing)
əb ^h i'neta	'actor' (Sanskrit borrowing)

In compound nouns of four syllables, the two components retain their original stress patterns--the first component having the primary stress and the second the secondary stress, e.g.,

[ʔaru,təɾəp ^h]	'all round' (lit. 'four sides')
[bunə,bəla]	'weaver (lit. 'weave + doer')
[bi'rar,bəla]	'owner of the land fit to grow seedlings'
[mir'ʕaĩ,bari]	'pepper garden'
[ən'ʈ ^h anbe,sə]	'ninety-eight hundred'

Verbs

All verbs of four syllables receive stress on the penultimate syllable. Examples:

[pəhũ'ʕaeb]	'to cause to arrive; to deliver'
[g ^h isi'yæb]	'to drag'
[hərbə'raeb]	'to hurry; to rattle'
[bisbi'saeb]	'to itch'
[ʕulʕu'laeb]	'to scratch an itch'
[dori'aeb]	'to lead on a rope'
[bohi'aeb]	'to wallow'

Like the compound nouns, periphrastic (also called compound) verbs also retain their original stress on the components, but both components receive primary stress. Examples:

[pə ^h a 'lagəb]	'to follow'
[səŋe 'jəeb]	'to escort'
[muri hi 'laeb]	'to nod (with head)'
[hap ^h i 'kəɾəb]	'to yawn'
[ənda 'parəb]	'to hatch (an egg)'
[pərti 'torəb]	'to clear a field'
[de'k ^h ar 'kəɾəb]	'to expose'
[d ^h e'kar 'kəɾəb]	'to belch'
[si'kar 'kəɾəb]	'to hunt'
[si'gar 'kəɾəb]	'to decorate'

To sum up, despite a few exceptions, the general pattern is for most verbs of Maithili to receive stress on the penultimate syllable.

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नेपाली जनजीवनमा देवी सरस्वतीको स्थान: एक अध्ययन

रुक्मिणी प्रधान (वन्त)^१

नेपाली जनजीवनमा देवदेवीहरूको महत्त्वपूर्ण स्थान रहेको छ । प्राचीनकालदेखिको इतिहास केलारर हेर्ने हो भने यस कुराको पुष्टि हुन्छ । सबभन्दा महत्त्वपूर्ण कुरा के छ भने नेपाली समाज धर्मसहिष्णु थियो र छ । यही धर्मसहिष्णुताको कारण नेपाली जनजीवनमा विभिन्न देवदेवीहरूले स्थान पाएका हुन् । उदाहरणको लागि प्राचीन लिच्छवि राजा मानदेवलाई लिन सक्छौं । व्यक्तिगत रूपमा उनी विष्णुका भक्त थिए, तर उनी आफ्नै शिवधर्म र बुद्धधर्मका अनुयायी समेत रहेको कुरा उनका अभिलेखहरूबाट थाहा हुन्छ । तात्कालिक समयमा एउटै परिवारका सदस्यहरूलाई कुनै पनि धर्म मान्न छुट थियो ।

राजा अशुवमाले आफ्नो प्रशस्तिमा 'भगवत्पशुपतिभट्टारकपादानुगृहीत' भनी लेखी शिवधर्म प्रति आफ्नो आस्थालाई अर्पित्याएका छन् । तर उनको अन्य अभिलेखहरूको अध्ययन गर्ने हो भने उनी अन्य धर्मप्रति विमुख नभएको थाहा हुन्छ । यो कुरा उनको हाँडिगाउँ स्थित संवत् ३२ को शिलालेखले स्पष्ट गर्दछ^२ । राजा नरेन्द्रदेवले पनि आफूलाई 'पशुपतिभट्टारकपादानुगृहीत' भनेका छन् । साथै चिनिया राजदूत वाङ्गयुन्चेको वर्णनलाई मान्ने हो भने राजा नरेन्द्रदेव बुद्धमूर्ति अंकित कम्मरपेटी लाउँथे भन्ने थाहा हुन्छ । यस्ता अरू पनि धेरै उदाहरण हाम्रो अघि छन् । यसबाट नेपाली जनजीवन धर्मको कुरामा स्वतन्त्र रहेको तथा कुनै अनुदारतामा नबाँधिएको बुझिन्छ । धार्मिक बन्देज नभएको हुँदा नै देशका तीन मुख्य धर्म (शैव, वैष्णव, बौद्ध) को विकास समान रूपमा भएको थियो । यसको साथै अन्य सम्प्रदायले पनि प्रश्रय पाएको थियो । सौर^३, शाक्त^३ आदि सम्प्रदाय तात्कालिक धार्मिकसहिष्णुताको देन हो ।

गहिरिहर हेर्ने हो भने त्यसवेलाको धार्मिक भावनाको नीलो तथा अनौठो रूप शैव र वैष्णव सम्प्रदायलाई एक पार्नु देखापर्छ । देउपाटन गचाननिमा रहेको 'हरिहर' (शङ्कर-नारायण) को मूर्ति उपरोक्त कुराको ठोस प्रमाण हो^४ । यसमा रहेको लिच्छवि अभिलेखबाट यो तात्कालिक कलाको सुन्दर नमूनाको साथै राजनैतिक भावनाको पनि प्रतिबिम्ब यसमा देखापर्छ । तापनि यो नेपाली धार्मिक समन्वयको एउटा ज्वलन्त उदाहरणको रूपमा रहेको हो भन्न हिचकिचाउनु पर्दैन ।

१ श्रीमती रुक्मिणी प्रधान, नेपाल र एसियाली अनुसन्धान केन्द्रका अनुसन्धान सहायक हुनुहुन्छ ।

यसरी लिच्छविसमयमा रहेको धार्मिक सहिष्णुता मध्यकालमा पनि कायमै रह्यो । यो कुरा मध्यकालका विभिन्न शिलालेख तथा विभिन्न सम्प्रदायका मूर्तिहरू यत्र तत्र छरिएर रहेकोबाट थाहा हुन्छ । यसै मध्ये वैष्णव धर्मकी देवी मानिएकी 'देवी सरस्वती' लाई लिएर म आफ्नो लेख अगाडि बढाउँदैछु ।

हिन्दू धर्मानुसार देवी सरस्वती विद्याकी देवी हुन् । यो कुरा उनको मूर्तिको हातमा पुस्तक देखाइएकोबाट थाहा हुन्छ । हामी हिन्दूहरूले सरस्वती देवीलाई विद्याकी देवीको रूपमा पूजा गरी धूमधामसँग उत्सव मनाउने गरेको कुरा 'वसन्तपञ्चमी' वा 'सरस्वती पूजा' को दिन सरस्वती मन्दिरमा लाग्ने पीढेले बताउँछ । माघशुक्ल पञ्चमी (श्रीपञ्चमी) को दिन मनाइने सरस्वती पूजा नेपाली जनतामा निकै लोकप्रिय छ । पछि गएर हिन्दूधर्मले सरस्वतीलाई विद्याकी देवी भनेर पुजे फेरि बौद्धधर्ममा मंजुश्रीलाई विद्वान् तथा विद्याका देवताको रूपमा मान्न थालियो र पछि यही बौद्ध देवता मंजुश्रीलाई हिन्दूहरूले पनि सरस्वतीको रूपमा मान्न थालेको अनाैठो प्रथा हामी नेपाली समाजमा पाउँछौं । त्यही 'सरस्वती पूजा' वा 'वसन्त पञ्चमी' लाई हिन्दूहरू सरस्वतीको पूजाको रूपमा मान्दछन् भने बौद्धहरू मन्जुश्रीको जन्म दिनको रूपमा मनाउँछन्^१ । बुद्धधर्मानुसार मंजुश्री बोधिस्तव हुन् । तापनि यिनी काल्पनिक व्यक्ति होइनन् । बौद्ध धर्ममा मन्त्रवादको जन्म दिने आचार्यमा यिनको नाम छ । यिनी प्रकाण्ड विद्वान् भएको हुँदा बौद्ध समाजमा यिनी ज्ञानका प्रतीक, विद्याको देवताको रूपमा साकार छन् । सरस्वती फेरि पुस्तक धारण गरेको मूर्ति देवतुल्य पूज्य रहेको छ ।

यसरी आज नेपाली जनजीवन बीच बुद्ध धर्मका देवता मंजुश्री तथा हिन्दू धर्मका विद्याकी देवी सरस्वतीमा भेद रहेन । 'सरस्वती पूजा' वा 'श्रीपञ्चमी' ले यस कुराको पुष्टि गर्दछ । उक्त दिन प्रायः प्रत्येक जसो व्यक्तिहरू सरस्वती पूजार्थ स्वयम्भू स्थित सरस्वती स्थानमा गई पूजा गर्ने गर्दछन् । तर त्यहाँ सरस्वतीको कुनै मूर्ति हामी पाउँदैनौं । मूर्तिका सट्टा मंजुश्रीको पाइली रहेको छ^२ । उक्त पाइलाको पछाडि कुनामा पद्मपाणि लोकेश्वरको मूर्ति स्थापित छ । साथै त्यहाँ रहेको शिलापत्रहरूमा पनि मंजुश्रीको नै नामोल्लेख भएको छ । यी कुराहरूमाथि विचार गर्ने हो भने उक्त स्थान तथा मन्दिर बौद्ध भावनामा रहेको हुनुपर्ने हो । तर नेपाली जनजीवनमा रहेको धार्मिक सहिष्णुताले गर्दा उक्त मन्दिर बौद्ध सम्प्रदायको मात्र नभानी हिन्दू धर्मकी देवीको वासस्थानको रूपमा समेत मान्यता दिन पुगेको छ । तर अनाैठो कुरा के छ भने बौद्ध देवता मंजुश्रीलाई हिन्दूहरू सरस्वतीको रूपमा मान्दछन् तापनि हिन्दूदेवी सरस्वतीलाई बौद्धहरूले मंजुश्रीको रूपमा लिएका छैनन् । यो कुन भावनामा केन्द्रित रहेको छ भन्न गाह्रो छ ।

यसरी धूमधामसँग मनाइने 'वसन्त पञ्चमी' उपत्यकामा मात्र सीमित रहेको छैन । यो सरस्वती पूजा नेपालको पहाडी खण्डदेखि तराई भूभागसम्म उत्तिकै श्रद्धा भक्ति पूर्वक मनाइने गरेको हामी पाउँछौं । पहाडी खण्ड र तराई प्रदेशमा मनाइने प्रक्रिया केही फरक देखापर्छ ।

नेपालको अन्य पहाडी भाग धरान, दोलखा आदि स्थानमा सरस्वतीको मन्दिरमा गई धूमधामसँग बाजागाजाकासाथ उत्सव मनाइन्छ । तराईतिर वसन्तफन्चमीको लागि १०।१२ दिन पहिले देखिनै कालीगढहरूद्वारा सरस्वतीको (माटोको) मव्य मूर्ति बनाउन लगाइन्छ । मूर्ति निकै कलात्मक र आकर्षक हुन्छ । यही मूर्तिमा शहरी तथा विद्यार्थीहरूले पूजा आजाकासाथ देवी सरस्वतीको मंगल गान आरतीद्वारा 'वसन्तफन्चमी' उत्सव पूरा गर्छन् । भोलिपल्ट उक्त मूर्तिलाई कुनै तोकिएको नदीमा सेलाउने (बगाउने) गरेको पाइन्छ । विराटनगर, जनकपुर, गौर, कलैया आदि तराई भागमा यस्तै प्रथा चलेको पाउँछौं । तर यो प्रथा कतिको प्राचीनतम हो; त्यो थाहा छैन । तापनि तत्कालै मूर्ति बनाई त्यसको नाश गर्नु कलाको ह्रास हो । तराईमा सरस्वती पूजाको साथै दशैमा मनाइने दुर्गापूजा पनि यही अनुसार मनाएको देखिन्छ ।

नेपाली परम्परामा देवी सरस्वतीलाई बलि (पशु) दिइएको देखिँदैन । तर धेरै जसो सरस्वती मन्दिरसँगै निशान जस्तो काठमा वा मन्दिरसँगै अन्य देवी स्थापित गरिएकोमा बलि चढाउने गरेको देखा पर्छ । देउपाटन स्थित जयवागीश्वरी मन्दिर र स्वयम्भूको सरस्वती स्थानको परम्पराले उपर्युक्त कुराको पुष्टि गर्छ । यो एउटा अवम्बको परम्परा रहि आएको छ । हुनत शतपथब्राह्मणको एक ठाउँमा राजसूययज्ञ गरिने सिलसिलामा सरस्वतीलाई बलि दिने उल्लेख परेको छ ।

० 'श्वेत अश्विनो भवति श्वेताविवह्याश्चिनावविर्मलहा सारस्वती
भवत्पृष्ठाभमिन्द्राय सुत्राम्ने ७।

(अश्विनीका लागि सेतौ पशु बलि दिनु पर्छ । मल्ला भैठो सरस्वतीलाई दिनु -
पर्छ) ।

यसबाट तात्कालिक समाजमा सरस्वतीलाई बलि दिइन्थ्यो भन्ने थाहा हुन्छ । शायद यी सरस्वती देवी 'सप्तशती' मा वर्णित आठ हाते भस्की दैत्यलाई मार्ने देवीको रूपमा पूजिएको हुँदा बलि दिने गरिएको हो कि ? यसको प्रतीक नेपाली परम्परामा देवी सरस्वतीको मन्दिर नगीचै शक्तिको आवाहन गरी बलि दिने परम्परा चलि आएको होला भनी अनुमान गर्न सकिन्छ ।

पछि गएर ज्ञानसँग सम्बद्ध वस्तुहरूलाई सरस्वतीको नाम दिने परम्परा समेत चलेको पनि पाउँछौं । केही वर्ष पहिले सरस्वतीपूजाको दिन विक्री गरिने 'सरस्वती चूर्ण' विद्यार्थी वर्गमा निकै लोकप्रिय रहेको थियो । यस चूर्णले विद्या बढ्छ भन्ने विश्वास थियो । यस चूर्णले विद्या ज्ञान बढाउँदथ्यो भनी आँखा चिम्लेर विश्वास गर्न सकिन्न । हुनसक्छ, यस औषधीको प्रभावले स्मरण शक्ति बढ्दो हो ।

राणाकालिक नेपालमा शिक्षाको नियन्त्रणको लागि 'त्रि-चन्द्र कलेज' र 'दरबार हाई-स्कूल' जस्ता विद्याका केन्द्र खुलेका थिए । त्यस बेला पनि 'सरस्वती सदन' साहित्यिक

सम्मेलनको लागि 'समागृह' को प्रतीक रहेको थियो । जुन आजसम्म कलेजको एक अंगको रूपमा रहिरहेको छ । यहाँ कला विज्ञानादिको चर्चा पनि हुन्थ्यो । यसको लगत्तै पछि अर्को साहित्यिक संस्था 'सरस्वती पूजा' को नामले जन्म लिइयो । यसबाट राणाकालिक नेपाली समाज स्वतन्त्र नभएको हुँदा र खास गरी शिद्दा, दीक्षा, लेखपढ सम्बन्धी भावना व्यक्त गर्ने माध्यम धार्मिक पढाको बनाई सरस्वतीको नाममा सम्बद्ध रहेको देखापर्न आउँछ ।

हालको नेपाली समाजमा पनि देवी सरस्वतीको उही स्थान छ, जुन पहिले थियो । उदाहरणको लागि कमलादि स्थित 'राष्ट्रिय प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठान' लाई लिन सक्छौं । ज्ञान, विद्या, कलाआदिको प्रचार प्रसार गरी उत्साहित गराउने यस भवनको माथिल्लो भागमा रहेको वीणा, पुस्तक लिएकी, हंसवाहिनी सरस्वतीको भव्य मूर्तिलाई यस प्रसंगमा बिर्सनु हुन्न । यहाँ सम्मकी शिद्दा समितिको क्वापमा समेत देवी सरस्वतीको सानो मूर्ति अंकित छ । यी सब देवता देवी सरस्वतीले शिद्दाको क्षेत्रमा के कति स्थान ओगटेकी रहीछन् भनी मनिरहुनु आवश्यक पर्दैन ।

नेपालमा देवी सरस्वतीलाई मानी पूजा गर्ने प्रचलन कहिले देखि आयो होला भनी किटेर भन्न सम्भव हैन । प्रशस्त ऐतिहासिक सामाग्रीहरू उपलब्ध नभएको हुँदा यसै हो भनेर भन्न नसकिएको हो । यो अफै खोजीको विषय छ तापनि नेपाली इतिहासको सामाग्री रही आएको शिलापत्रहरूको अध्ययन गर्ने हो भने नेपालमा सरस्वतीको पूजा वा त्यसको प्रचलन कहिले देखि शुरू भयो होला भनी अनुमान सम्म गर्न सकिन्छ । हुन त हिन्दू समाजमा पौराणिक युगदेखि नै देवी सरस्वतीको पूजा आराधना गरिन्थ्यो । यो कुरा महाभारतको अध्यायहरूको शुरूमा सरस्वतीको वन्दना गरिएकोबाट स्पष्ट हुन्छ^५ । माथि सप्तशती र शतपथ ब्राम्हणमा देवी सरस्वतीको वर्णन परेको कुरा भनिसकिएको छ । वैदिक युगमा पनि सरस्वतीको नामोल्लेख नदीको रूपमा परेको थाहा हुन्छ^६ ।

सरसरी हेर्दा नेपालमा पनि प्राचीनकालदेखि नै सरस्वतीको मान्यता रही आएको संकेत मिल्दछ । 'नेपाल माहात्म्यको'^{१०} एक ठाउँमा ब्रम्हाले देवी सरस्वतीलाई सँगको वर्णन परेबाट विद्याकी अधिष्ठात्री देवी सरस्वतीको आराधना प्राचीन समयदेखि नै गरिन्थ्यो भने अनुमान हुन्छ । त्यस्तै प्रसिद्ध 'पशुपति पुराण'^{११} मा पनि 'देवी सरस्वती भन्ने नदीको नाम परेको छ । यसबाट प्राचीन समयदेखि देवी सरस्वतीको मान्यता रहिसकेको ज्ञात हुन्छ, चाहे त्यो तीर्थस्थलको रूपमा नै किन नहोस् ।

लिच्छविकालमा पनि सरस्वतीपरम्पराको मान्यता कम थिएन । प्राचीन नेपालका प्रसिद्ध राजा अंशुवर्माले लिएको पदवी 'श्रीकलहाभिमानी'^{१२} लाई लक्ष्मी (धन) सँग फगडा गर्नुमा गर्व मान्ने वा 'सरस्वतीको भक्त' मान्ने हो भने नेपालमा लिच्छविकालदेखि नै सरस्वती पूजाको प्रचलन रहिसकेको थियो भन्न गाह्रो पर्दैन ।

केही विद्वान्हरूको मत अनुसार 'श्री' ले लक्ष्मीलाई संकेत गरेको होइन । यो राजाहरूमा लगाइने राजोचित विशेषण हो भन्ने छ^{१३} । समकालीन देश भारतमासमेत तिनताक राजाहरूको उपाधि, उपनाममा 'श्री' विशेषण लगाइने प्रथा नरहेको हुँदा नेपालमा मात्र एक्कासि देखाप-यो होला भन्न गाह्रो पर्छ । त्यसकारण अंशुवर्मा ले आफूलाई सरस्वतीभक्त भनी देखाउन नै 'श्री' प्रयोग गरेका हुन् । यसबाट तात्कालिक नेपाली समाजमा सरस्वतीपरम्परा माथि प्रकाश पार्न मदत मिल्दछ । त्यस्तै लेलेमा रहेको सरस्वतीकुण्ड र ज्ञानकुण्डले पनि नेपाली जनजीवनमा सरस्वती पूजाको प्राचीनतालाई अँगल्याएको पाउँछौं र यसबाट धेरै पहिले देखि नै सरस्वती पूजाले नेपाली समाजमा मान्यता पाइसकेको थाहा हुन्छ । अझ लेलेभैरवको लिच्छविकालिक शिलामिलेखहरूमा 'पण्डित' तथा 'विद्वान्'हरूको^{१४} चर्चा परेको हुँदा उल्लेखित त्यस्ता विद्वान् व्यक्तिहरू बढी थिए भन्ने थाहा हुन्छ । त्यसकारण 'सरस्वतीकुण्ड' र 'ज्ञानकुण्ड' ले त्यहाँ स्थान पाएको हो कि भन्ने अनुमान हुन्छ ।

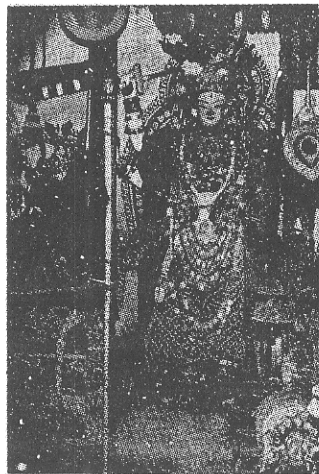
पछि गएर कर्णाली प्रदेशका राजाहरूले पनि आफ्नो विशेषण आदिमा सरस्वतीको भक्त भनी देखाउन खोजेको पाइन्छ । प्रमाणको रूपमा कर्णालीका प्रसिद्ध राजा पृथ्वी मल्लको पालामा एक कविले आफूलाई 'वालसरस्वती सुमति' भन्ने पदवीले अलंकृत गरेका थिए^{१५} । यसै ताका पाटनका एक कविले पनि आफूलाई 'वालसरस्वती' भन्ने पदवीले विमूषित गरेका छन्^{१६} । यसबाट त्यस युगमा सरस्वतीको नाममा पदवी आदि लिने परम्परा चलेको संकेत मिल्दछ ।

देउपाटनस्थित जयवागीश्वरीको मन्दिरमा सरस्वतीको मूर्ति स्थापित छ^{१७} । स्थानीय जनताहरू त्यसलाई सरस्वती मन्दिर भन्ने गर्दछन् । फेरि जयवागीश्वरी नै सरस्वती हुन् भन्ने संकेत मिल्छ । नेपाली जनजीवनमा शिवाको प्रारम्भिक कालमा सिकाइने वाक्यमा समेत वागीश्वरीको नाम परेको हुँदा यिनी सरस्वती नै हुन् भन्ने ज्ञान हुन्छ । गोपालराज-वंशावलीमा जयवागीश्वरीको उल्लेख परेको छ । तर त्यहाँ साल मितिको अभाव भएको हुँदा उक्त मन्दिर कहिले बन्यो भनी ठोकेर भन्न सकिएको छैन ।

देउपाटनस्थित जयवागीश्वरीको मूर्तिको पादपीठको अभिलेखबाट^{१८} यो सरस्वती मूर्ति लिच्छविकालको हो भनी ठोकेर भन्न सकिन्छ । तर यहाँ रहेको जयवागीश्वरीको मूर्ति नेपाली जनजीवनमा जनसाधारणले ठग्याउन सकिने वीणा पुस्तक धारिणी हंसवाहिनीको रूपमा नभई भिन्नै प्रकारको छ । यस उभिएको सरस्वतीको मूर्तिको सम्पूर्णजसो शरीर कपडाले ढाकेको छ । चार हात भएको यस मूर्तिका हातहरूमा वीणा पुस्तक आदि देखिंदैन । स्थानीय व्यक्तिहरूको भनाइअनुसार मूर्तिको हातहरूमा सिंहमु, ज्वलान्हायक, चक्र र खड्ग छ^{१९} । मूर्तिको अनुहार सलक मलेको देखिन्छ, तर अनुहारबाट यो मूर्ति अन्य लिच्छविकालिक ढुंगाको पालिस लगाएको नभएर विभिन्न रंगले रंगाएको जस्तो देखिन्छ । प्रत्येक बाइवर्षमा

१६४ सि एन ए एस जर्नल, मोलम ८, नं. १ (डिसेम्बर १९८०)

मन्दिर सफा गरी रंग आदि लगाउँदा उक्त जयवागीश्वरीको मूर्तिमा पनि रंग लगाउने गरिन्छ । यस मूर्तिमा खड्ग रहेको हुँदा बौद्ध देवता मञ्जुश्रीको प्रभाव पो हो कि ? साथै चक्र देखाइनु पनि अनौठो देखिन्छ । तापनि यी सब कुराहरू यस मूर्तिको विशेषताको रूपमा हामी पाउँछौं ।

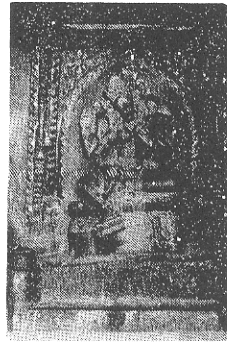


चि.१, जयवागीश्वरी (कैलाश पत्रिकाबाट)

लाजिम्पाटमा रहेको 'साकुना ससमाजु' (सरस्वती) को मूर्तिमा भने वीणा, पुस्तक र हृद्भाटामाला लिएको स्पष्ट देखिन्छ । 'विष्णुधर्मोत्तर' ग्रन्थमा पनि सरस्वतीको हातमा हुनु पर्ने साधनहरूमा यिनै कुराहरू हुन्छन् भनेको छ । अफ्नै यहाँ सेतो सरस्वती, सेतो लुगा लगाएको समेत भनेको छ^{२०} । तर नेपालमा सरस्वतीको मूर्तिहरू प्रायः ढुंगामा बनेको पाइएको हुँदा सरस्वतीका रंगहरूबारे यसै हो भन्न गाह्रो पर्छ । किनभने धेरैजसो देवदेवीहरूको मूर्ति कालो चिल्लो वा फुस्रो खालको ढुंगामा कुँदिएको हुन्छ । जसमा रंगहरूको समावेश भएको हुँदैन । शायद जयवागीश्वरीको मूर्तिमा सेतो रंग दलेर सेतो सरस्वतीको आराधना पूजा गर्न तर्फ तात्कालिक भक्तहरू अग्रसरभएका हुन् कि त भन्ने अनुमान हुन्छ, तर स्पष्ट केही छैन ।

लाजिम्पाटमा रहेका देवी सरस्वतीको उक्त मूर्ति कहिले बन्यो भनी निश्चित रूपमा भन्न हामीसँग कुनै साधन छैन । त्यहाँ लिखित रूपमा कुनै अभिलेखहरू नभएको हुँदा अन्यौलमा पर्दछौं । तर पाटन बालकुमारी स्थित ने.सं. ४३४ मा बनेको सरस्वतीको मूर्तिसँग दाज्ने हो भने लाजिम्पाटको सरस्वती अफ्नै कलात्मक र सुन्दर देखिन्छ । कालो चिल्लो ढुंगामा कुँदिएको यस मूर्तिको शारीरिक बनावट चट्ट मिलेको देखिनुका साथै हँसिलो अनुहारले आफ्नो भक्तजनहरूमा ज्ञान दिइरहेको जस्तो लाग्छ । यी सबै कारणहरूलाई ध्यानमा राख्दा बालकुमारीको सरस्वती मूर्ति भन्दा यो अफ्नै प्राचीन हो कि जस्तो लाग्छ । यस सरस्वती स्थानसँगै लिच्छविकालको एक अभिलेख पाइएको छ । तर सो अभिलेख ज्यादै सिक्रेको हुँदा

पढ्ने गाह्रो छ । यस कारण त्यताबाट पनि प्रस्तुत विषयमा कुनै प्रकाश पर्दैन ।



चित्र २, लाजिम्पाटको सरस्वती मूर्ति, पादपीठमा गणेशको सानो मूर्ति ।

नेपालमा ऐतिहासिक प्रमाणको आधारमा सरस्वतीको सर्वप्राचीन मूर्ति ने.सं. ४३४ को हो (यद्यपि हामीले जयवागीश्वरीको मूर्तिलाई लिच्छविकालको हो भनी मानेका छौं तापनि त्यहाँ रहेको अभिलेखमा समय (मिति) नभएको हुँदा तोकेर यतिको नै हो भनी भन्न सकेका छैनौं), भनी स्वदेशी इतिहासकार रेग्मीज्यूले आफ्नो एक पुस्तकमा लेख्नु भएको छ । पाटन ससुखेलस्थित उक्त मूर्तिमा ४३४ को अभिलेख छ^{२१} । तर फर्पिगमा रहेको एक अप्रकाशित अभिलेखमाथि ध्यान दिने हो भने ने.सं. ४३४ भन्दा पहिले देखि नै सरस्वतीको मूर्ति स्थापना भइसकेको थाहा हुन्छ ।

१. श्री कुलचन्द्ररानेनो उद्दिशित्व सरस्वतीभटारिका स्थापि(तां)
२. (संवत् ३१२ ज्येष्ठ (कृष्ण) दसम्याम् हरिचन्द्रात्मज जेतचन्द्रन ऐल्लोकिक पार -
३. (लौ) किक मुक्ति मुक्त्यार्थ स्थापित मिति ।।

(..... श्रीकुलचन्द्रलाई लख गरेर सरस्वती 'देवीको स्थापना गरियो । ने.सं. ३१२ (वि.सं. १२४६) ज्येष्ठ कृष्ण दशमीको दिन हरिचन्द्रका छोरा जेतचन्द्रले हल्लोकमा मुक्ति र परलोकमा मुक्तिको लागि स्थापना गरिएको हो ।)

यस शिलाअभिलेखको अध्ययनबाट रेग्मीज्यूको उपरोक्त भनाइ गलत सिद्ध हुन्छ । किन भने यसमा स्पष्ट 'सरस्वती भटारिका स्थापि(ता)' भनिनुका साथै संवत् ३१२ पनि स्पष्ट छ । यो सरस्वती मूर्ति मूर्तिकलाको सुन्दर नमूना हो । यस मूर्तिको मुकुटको बनावट अन्य मूर्तिहरू भन्दा भिन्नै प्रकारको देखिन्छ ।



चित्र ३, फर्पिङमा ने.सं. ३१२ को सरस्वती मूर्ति ।

१६६ सि एन ए एस जनल, मोलम ८, नं. ८ (डिसेम्बर १९८०)

ने.सं. ३१२ को सरस्वतीमूर्ति पछि ने.सं. ४३४ को पाटन बालकुमारी स्थानको शिला-लेखमा नै सरस्वतीको वर्णन परेको छ ।

ॐ नमः सारदायैः ।। त्रयोस्तु.....

..... सके प्रतिष्ठा केलाः । बैशाखमास -

मसिते तिथि सते चतुः चतुर्त्रिंशकाले सोम्येकवार -

गरकर्णसजे..... सारदा जगतः मातृ पटि थिते..... राज..... ।

..... २२ ।

यसमा सरस्वतीलाई 'सारदा जगतः मातृ' भनी व्यक्त गरेको छ । त्यसकारण मध्य-काल-सम्ममा विद्या तथा कला, साहित्यकी आराध्य देवी सरस्वतीलाई जगतको रक्षार्थ पूजा-आजा गर्ने गरेको मान पर्छ । हुन सक्छ पछि शाहकालमा रणवहादुर शाहले आफ्नी पनपरेकी रानीलाई सन्धो नभएको कारण तीनताक नेपालमा प्रशस्त गिद्धहरू देखापरेको हो कि भनी लागेको हुँदा गिद्धहरू मार्न लगाएका थिए र गिद्ध पोलेको ठाउँमा केटाकेटीहरूलाई नराप्ति होला (भूत-प्रेत लाग्ने जस्तो भावना) भनी सरस्वतीको मूर्ति स्थापना गर्न लगाएका थिए^{२३} ।

यसबाट शुरू शुरूमा विद्या, वाणी, ज्ञान, कला आदि की देवी मानिएकी सरस्वती-लाई विस्तार-विस्तार विद्याकी देवी मात्र नमानेर केटाकेटीको रक्षार्थ स्थापना गरिने चलन चलेको थाहा हुन आउँछ । यो भावना मध्यकालमा नै व्यक्त भै सकेको थियो कि भन्ने थोरै संकेत ने.सं. ४३४ को अभिलेखले नै गर्छ । फेरि अर्को कुरा प्रायः सरस्वतीका मूर्ति (वा मन्दिर) हरू एकान्त स्थान वा श्मशान जस्तो देखिने ठाउँमा रहेकोले पनि उपरोक्त भावना-लाई पुष्टि दिन्छ । पाटन बालकुमारी ससुखेलको सरस्वती मन्दिर, लाजिम्पाटको सकुना ससमाजु आदि त्यस्तै स्थानमा रहेको छ । त्यस्तै मनवज्र वज्राचार्यज्यूले आफ्नो पुस्तकमा लेख्नु भएको छ 'तेह्रौँ शताब्दीका सरस्वतीका पाठाण मूर्तिहरू उपत्यकाको श्मशानस्थलहरूमा यत्र तत्र छन्'^{२४} ।

यहाँ रहेको यो सरस्वतीको मूर्ति पनि देउपाटनको जयवागीश्वरीको मूर्ति जस्तो उभिएको रूपमा देखापर्छ । यहाँ अक्षमाला र पुस्तक देखा पर्छ; वीणा भने छैन । चार हाते यस मूर्तिको तल्लो दुई हात कमलको फूलमा अड्याइएको र दाहिने हात वरद मुद्रामा छ । कमलको आसनमा उभिएको यो मूर्ति सुन्दर तथा कलापूर्ण छ । करीव ४ फिट अग्लो यस मूर्तिको शरीरमा प्रशस्त गहनाहरू देखाइएका छन् । अलंकृत वनमाला मुकुट, हार, बाजुबन्द, केयूर, कमरबन्द, कण्ठहार (नेक्लेस) आदि गहनाहरूले सिंगारिएको यस मूर्तिले तात्कालिक समाजको प्रचलित गहनाहरू तर्फ पनि ध्यानाकर्षण गराउँदछ ।



चित्र ४, पाटन बालकुमारी ४३४ को सरस्वती मूर्ति ।

यस पछि क्रमसँग समय समयमा देवी सरस्वतीप्रति भक्ति देखाउनुका साथै सरस्वतीको मूर्ति स्थापना गरी शिलापत्रहरू राख्न लगाउने र सरस्वतीको स्तोत्र पाठादि कुदाउँन लगाएको पाइन्छ । पाटनकै एक अर्को अभिलेखमा, सरस्वतीको मूर्ति स्थापना गरेको वर्णन परेको छ --

ॐ नमः श्रीना (सा) रदायै ॥ या शक्तिः परमेश्विनो मधुरिपोः

शक्तिस्त्रिसन्ध्यासु च स्याद्बालायुवतीजरात्रिगुणगा पद्मास-

नस्था च या ॥ सज्जाप्यावलि पुस्तकामयवरादोर्मिश्रतुभिर्धृता

प्रसूरयेद्भुवः श्रीसारदा नित्यशः

श्रीयदामल्लोभूपोऽस्ति नेपाले तेन पालिते स्थापिता सारदा

देवि ललितापुरप्राग्दिशि.....

स्वस्ति श्री नेपालिक सम्बत् १६७ ज्येष्ठ

..... २५ ॥

ने.सं. ६६८ को एक अभिलेखको शुरुमा विष्णुको संगसँग सरस्वतीको स्तुति गरिएको

छ ।

ॐ नमो श्रीश्रीश्रीवासुदेवाय ॥ नारायणं नमस्कृत्य नरं

चैव नरोत्तमं । देवीं सरस्वतीं चैव ततो जयमुदिरयेत्.....

..... सम्बत् ६६८-२६ ।

(श्रीश्रीश्रीवासुदेवलाई नमस्कार, नारायणलाई नरोत्तमनरलाई र सरस्वतीलाई नमस्कार गरेर जय पुकार्नु..... ने.सं. ६६८) ।

ठमेल भगवान्बहाल स्थित एक शिलामिलेखमा पनि देवी सरस्वतीको स्थापना गरेको कुरा परेको छ । यसै अभिलेखमा मञ्जुश्री स्थापना गरेको पनि वर्णन छ ।

१६८ सि एन ए एस जनल, भोलम ८, नं. १ (डिसेम्बर १९८०)

शुभ सम्बत् ८०२ चैत्र मासे..... श्री ३ गंधुलि
वाहारया मुलचुकयाव सेडोओ चेकन अतन शीया-
ओ ल्होना जुरो ।। श्री ३ मंजुश्री देव हमं १ श्री ३ सरसुतिदेवि
स १ थुति थापना याडोओ, थ्व दिन कुन्हु प्रस्थिस्था
याडोओ जुरो शुभ^{२७} ।।

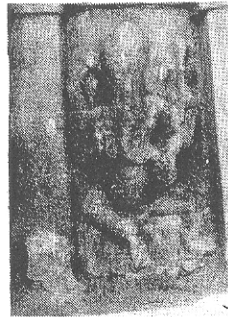
(शुभ सम्बत् ८०२ चैत्र..... श्री ३ गंधुलि विहारको मूलचोक बिग्रेको
हुंदा तेलिया ईट कापेर बनाइयो । श्री ३ मंजुश्री देव एक, श्री ३ सरस्वती देवी एक, यति
स्थापना गरेर यस दिन प्रतिष्ठा गरियो । शुभ)

यसबाट हिन्दू देवी सरस्वतीलाई बौद्ध ज्ञानको देवता मंजुश्रीका साथ-साथै विहारहरू-
मा समेत स्थापना गरिने चलन चलेको थाहा हुन्छ । तर ठमेलस्थित भगवान् बहालको यो
सरस्वतीको मूर्ति नेपालमा प्राप्त अन्य सरस्वतीको मूर्ति भन्दा बेग्लै खालको छ । अन्यमा
फेँ यस मूर्तिमा न त वीणा न धारणा गरेकी छ न हाँस न देखा पर्छ । यो उभिएको दुई
हाते मूर्तिलाई संगै रहेको मंजुश्री फेँ कमलमा देखाइएको छ । मंजुश्री फेँ नै दुवै हातले कमलको
फूल समातेको छ र फूल माथि दाहिने तिर रुद्राक्षमाला र देब्रेतिर पुस्तक स्पष्ट देखिन्छ ।
मंजुश्रीको मूर्तिमा भने रुद्राक्षको सट्टा खड्ग देखिन्छ^{२८} । यस सरस्वती मूर्तिमा गहना सादा
देखाइएको छ । हातमा बाजुबन्ध, केयूर, कानमा कर्णफूल र घाँटीमा कण्ठहार (नेक्लेस)
को साथै घुँडासम्म पुग्ने वनमाला देखिन्छ । मल्लकालिक अन्य मूर्तिमा देखिने प्रशस्त गहनाहरू
फेँ यसमा प्रयोग गरिएको छैन तापनि कलाको दृष्टिले यो मूर्ति त्यतिको सुन्दर देखिंदैन ।
यस्तै कमलादी गणेश मन्दिर पछाडि रहेको सरस्वतीको मूर्ति (स्थानीय जनताहरूको भनाइ)
पनि दुई हाते उभिएको देखाइएको छ । अफेँ यसमा सरस्वतीको कुनै चिन्ह देखा पर्दैन । यो
प्रस्तर मूर्ति हेर्दा कलात्मक देखिन्छ । ढुंगा पनि कालो चिल्लो (ढुंगामा लगाइने पालिस
लगाएको) छ । फट्ट हेर्दा यो मूर्ति मध्यकालको पूर्वार्द्धको हो कि जस्तो देखिन्छ । तर
अभिलेखको अभावमा किटेर भन्न भने सक्दैनौं । वज्रवाराही नैर एउटा सानो मन्दिरमा देवी
सरस्वतीको सानो मूर्ति छ । यो चारहाते उभिएको मूर्ति स्पष्ट छैन । खप्पो ढुंगामा कुँदिएको
यो मूर्तिमा उभिएको अन्य सरस्वती मूर्तिमा जस्तो वीणाको अभाव छ तापनि रुद्राक्षमाला
र पुस्तक स्पष्ट देखिन्छ । दाहिने पट्टिको तल्लो हात पाटन वालकुमारीको फेँ वरद मुद्रा-
मा छ भने तल्लो देब्रेहात खण्डित छ । पशुपति गौरी मन्दिर जाने बाटो नैर दुईहाते उभिए
को सरस्वतीको सुन्दर कलात्मक मूर्ति रहेको छ । यसको दाहिने हातमा कुनै फल र देब्रेहात
कम्मरमा अवस्थित छ । यसै सिलासिलामा कीर्तिपुरमा रहेको सरस्वतीको मव्यमूर्तिलाई पनि
बिर्सनु हुन्न । यसमा अभिलेख पनि कुँदिएको छ तर अस्पष्ट भएको हुँदा पढ्न सकिएको छैन ।



चित्र ५, कीर्तिपुरको सरस्वती मूर्ति, पादपीठमा गणेश सहित ।

यसरी काठमाडौं उपत्यकामा रहेका सरस्वतीका मूर्ति हामी दुई तीन प्रकारका देख्छौं । जसमध्ये बसेको वीणा लिएको र उभिएको वीणा नलिएको मुख्य रूपमा पाइन्छ । यसबाट नेपाली जनजीवनमा देवी सरस्वतीलाई मान्ने अनौठो प्रथा रहेको थाहा हुन्छ । अफ देवी सरस्वतीको मूर्तिको पादपीठमा देब्रेतिर गणेशको सानो मूर्ति देखापर्नु नेपालीहरूको आफ्नैपन हो । यस प्रकार गणेशको मूर्ति बसेको सरस्वतीको मूर्तिमा मात्र रहेको देखिन्छ । (फोटोहरू हेर्नु होस्) तर फर्पिङ्गको सरस्वती मूर्तिको पादपीठमा गणेश मूर्ति नभई भिन्नै रहेको छ । (चित्र ६) यस्तो अन्त पनि देखिन्छ । कुन प्रकारको भावना अन्तर्गत यो कुंदियो भन्न सकिन्न । मनवज्र वज्राचार्यज्यूले पनि सरस्वती मूर्ति सँगै गणेशको मूर्ति कुंदिएको वर्णन गर्नु भएको छ^{२६} ।



चित्र ६, फर्पिङ्गको गणेश मूर्ति ।

अन्य पहाडी भेक तिरको सरस्वती मन्दिर आफैले राम्रोसँग नघुमेको हुँदा त्यहाँ के कस्तो प्रकारको सरस्वती मूर्तिको प्रधानता रहेको थियो भनी भन्न सकिएको छैन ।

विद्या तथा सम्पूर्ण कलाकी देवी सरस्वती वैदिक युगमा नदीको रूपमा प्रसिद्ध थिइन् । यिनै सरस्वती नदीको किनारमा वैदिक संस्कृतिको विकास भएको विश्वास छ^{३०} । पछि यिनै सरस्वती वाक्देवीको रूपमा पुराणहरूमा चर्चित भइन् । पुराणहरूमा सरस्वतीलाई मान्नी आएको कुरा थाहा हुन्छ । कहिलेकहीं सरस्वतीलाई ब्रम्हाकी छोरी र कहिले भने शक्ति

२०० सि एन ए एस जर्नल, मोलम ८, नं. १ (डिसेम्बर १९८०)

मानिएको छ भने कहिले विष्णुको शक्ति पनि मानिएको छ^{३१}। भारतमा देवी सरस्वतीलाई यी दुवैका साथ अन्य विभिन्न रूपमा मानिएको कुरा वेनर्जीको 'डेमलपमेण्ट अफ हिन्दू आइकोनोग्राफी' मन्ने पुस्तकबाट थाहा हुन्छ । यसमा ब्रम्हाको शक्तिको रूपमा देखाइँदा ब्रम्हाको दाहिने तर्फ देखाइन्छ । जबकि विष्णुको शक्ति हुँदा देब्रे सरस्वतीलाई पुष्टिको रूपमा र दाहिने लक्ष्मीलाई श्री को रूपमा देखाइएको थाहा हुन्छ (पृ. ३०) 'कालिदासका भारत' मन्ने पुस्तकमा पनि सरस्वतीलाई ब्रम्हाकी पत्नी भनी वर्णन गरेको छ^{३२}। यसबाट कालिदासकालीन भारतमा सरस्वतीलाई ब्रम्हाकी पत्नी वा शक्ति नै मानिएको थाहा हुन्छ। ऋग्वेदमा ब्रम्हा प्रार्थनाका देवता थिए । प्रार्थनाको लागि वाणीको आवश्यकता हुन्थ्यो । त्यसकारण सरस्वतीलाई वाणी वा काव्यकी देवीको रूपमा मानियो^{३३}। एक जना विदेशी विद्वान्ले सरस्वती महादेवकी छोरी, ब्रम्हाकी पत्नी र गणेशकी दिदी भनी लेखेका छन्^{३४}।

उपरोक्त कुराहरू माथि विचार गर्दा काव्य, कला, वाणी, विद्याकी देवी सरस्वती, ब्रम्हाकी पत्नीको रूपमा पूजा गरिएको कुरा स्पष्ट हुन्छ । अफ यिनी महादेव तथा पार्वती-की छोरीको रूपमा पनि चिनिन्छन् । यसबाट हिन्दू धर्ममा सरस्वतीलाई कुन रूपमा मानिन्थ्यो भनी बुझ्न गाह्रो पर्दैन । तर पुराणहरूमा सरस्वतीलाई पुष्टिको रूपमा विष्णुको पत्नी भनी मानिने हुँदा अफ अस्पष्टता रहेको देखापर्छ । यसो हुनुको कारण के हो बुझ्न सकिन्न । किनभने एउटै देवी विभिन्न देवताको शक्ति मानिने हुँदा अवम्म लाग्नु स्वामाविकै छ ।

पौराणिक युगको शुरुशुरुमा ब्रम्हाको निकै महत्त्वपूर्ण स्थान थियो । यिनी देवता-हरूको पिताको रूपमा रहेको हुँदा देवी सरस्वतीलाई ब्रम्हासँग जोडिएको हुन सक्छ । पछि क्रमशः समाजमा विष्णुको शक्ति वा महत्त्वको वृद्धिको साथै सरस्वतीलाई विष्णुसँग जोड्ने गरेको पनि हुन सक्छ । किनभने आज भोलि मानिने विष्णुको दशावतार पहिले पहिले ब्रम्हाको अवतारको रूपमा मानिएको थियो । पुनः सरस्वतीलाई ब्रम्हाकी छोरीको रूपमा लिनु पनि अनौठो छ भनी वा यो हिन्दू धर्मको विशेषता हो ।

पुराणहरू तथा भारतमा देवी सरस्वतीलाई जुन रूपमा मानिएको भएता पनि नेपालमा यिनलाई आफ्नै प्रकारको विशेषता प्राप्त छ । नेपाल महात्म्यको एक ठाउँमा सरस्वतीलाई ब्रम्हाकै पत्नी हो कि भने फेँ देखाउन खोजिएको छ । यद्यपि यहाँ स्पष्ट हैन --

‘एवं मुक्तः सुरैर्ब्रह्मा चिन्तयत् पद्मसम्भवः ॥

देवी सरस्वती देवः पद्माङ्गारि पद्मसम्भवीम् ।

विलोक्य सर्वभूतेषु जिह्वा बुद्धिर्भूतिः स्मृतिः ॥

चिन्तिता चोपतस्थौ सा पार्श्वे दृष्टा सरस्वती^{३५}।

(ब्रम्हाले कुम्भकर्णलाई वरदिन देवी सरस्वतीको स्मृति गरे । कमलबाट उत्पन्न भएकी सरस्वती ब्रम्हाको बगलमा उपस्थित भइन् र ब्रम्हाको आज्ञानुसार कुम्भकर्णमा प्रवेश गरी देवताको इच्छानुसारको वर माग्निन्)

यहाँ 'बगलमा उपस्थित भइन्' भन्ने शब्द परेको हुँदा यिनीलाई ब्रम्हाकी पत्नीको रूपमा प्रस्तुत गर्ने खोजिएको हो कि भन्ने अनुमान हुन्छ । त्यस्तै ८५२ को शंखमूलको एक अभिलेखमा पनि ब्रम्हसरस्वतीको नाम उल्लेख भएको छ ।

‘स्नातुर्जन्मनिवारिणी जडधियां जाड्यौघ विध्वंसिनी,
भूमृत्कन्दरदारिणी हरमुखाज्जाता जगत्पावनी ।
चंचत्कोटितरिणि मणिमती संगम्य संवाहिनी, सेयं
ब्रम्हसरस्वती विजयते गङ्गोपमा वाग्मती ।
..... सं. ८५२’ ।

(स्नान गर्नेहरूलाई मोक्षा दिने, भूखहरेको अज्ञान हटाइदिने, पहाडको गुफालाई फोर्ने महादेवको मुखबाट निस्केकी, संसारलाई पवित्र पार्ने अनेकौं तरंगहरू देखापर्ने मणिमतिसंग मिसिई बग्ने गङ्गा जस्ती यी ब्रम्हसरस्वती वाग्मती ठूली छन्)

हुन त यहाँ पनि ब्रम्हा र सरस्वतीको नाम संगसंगै परेको छ । तर यो पति पत्नीको रूपमा नरही वाणीसंग सम्बद्ध भएको हुँदा वाग्मतीसहित ब्रम्हा र सरस्वतीको वर्णन गरिएको हो कि जस्तो लाग्छ । तर यसै हो मनी ठोकेर यहाँ पनि भन्न सकिँदैन । तापनि नेपाली परम्परामा यस्तो भावना रहेको पाइँदैन । नेपालमा थोरै संकेत बाहेक सरस्वतीलाई ब्रम्हाको शक्तिको रूपमा मानेको हामी कम पाउँछौं^{३६} । देवी सरस्वतीलाई हामी विष्णुकी शक्तिहरूमध्ये एक मान्ने गर्छौं । यसरी हामी सरस्वती र लक्ष्मीलाई विष्णुका दुई पत्नीहरूको रूपमा मान्ने गर्दछौं । हाम्रो समाजमा आजपनि लक्ष्मी र सरस्वती संगसंगै रहन सक्ने भन्ने उक्तान प्रचलित छ । हुन पनि प्रायः जसो विद्वानहरू श्रीहीन देखापर्छन् भने सम्पन्न व्यक्तिहरूमा विद्वत्ताको कमी देखापर्छ । यद्यपि आजको युगमा यसको अपवाद पनि अवश्य नै देखा पर्छ । तैपनि यो उक्ति सारहीन भने छैन । नेपालको इतिहास पल्टाएर हेर्ने हो भने पनि यो कुरा स्पष्ट हुन्छ । प्राचीन नेपालका प्रसिद्ध राजा अंशुवर्माले आफूलाई ‘श्रीकलहामीमानी’ मनी गर्व गरेको बाट पनि उपरोक्त कुराको पुष्टि हुन्छ^{३७} ।

नेपाली परम्परामा सरस्वतीलाई विष्णुको पत्नीको मान्यता दिएको कुरा थाहा पाउन आजभन्दा करिब ५०० वर्ष पहिलेको एक शिलाअभिलेखले मदत गर्दछ । उक्त शिलापत्रमा निम्न कुरा उद्धृत छ--

ॐ नमो माधवाय । त्रैलोक्यस्त्राणहेतोः सुरमुनिनमितो माधवो-
विश्वयोनिस्त्रातु भक्तिजनानां सगुणपरिवृतं जन्मवासादिदुःख ।
लक्ष्मीयुक्तसहायः पुनरपिरहिता, शारदासास्वभार्या, तां दृष्ट्वा
मोहितात्मा भवदुरितहरः पातु वः श्रीमुरारिः ॥.... संवत् ६६५
चैत्र..... ३८ ।

(माधवलालाई नमस्कार । तीनै लोकको रक्षाको कारण भएका देवता मुनिहरूले ढोगि-
एका, संसारको कारण भएका परिवार सहित भक्तजनहरूलाई जन्मादि दुःखबाट रक्षा गर्ने
लक्ष्मी सहित भएका फेरि शारदाले पनि सहित भएका, ती शारदालाई देखेर मुग्ध भएका
श्रीमुरारिले तिमीहरूलाई रक्षा गर्नु..... संवत् ६६५ चैत्र) ।

यसबाट ने.सं. ६६५ भन्दा पहिले देखि नै सरस्वती विष्णुको पत्नीको रूपमा नेपाली
जनजीवनमा प्रिय भैसकेको कुरा थाहा हुन आउँछ ।

संवत् ६६८ को अर्को एक अभिलेखले पनि उपर्युक्त कुराको संकेत गर्दछ । यहाँ देवी
सरस्वतीको स्तुति गरिएको छ । विशेष गरी जुन स्तुति हामी 'महामात' को शुरूमा
गरेको पाउँछौं । यहाँ विष्णुको स्तुतिको साथै सरस्वतीको स्तुति परेको देखापर्छ ।

ॐ नमो श्रीश्रीश्रीवासुदेवाय ॥ नारायणं नमस्कृत्य नरं चैव नरोत्तमं ।
देवीं सरस्वतीं चैव ततो जयमुदिरयेत्..... ३९ ।

(श्रीश्रीश्रीवासुदेवलालाई नमस्कार, नारायणलाई नरोत्तम नरालाई र सरस्वतीलाई
नमस्कार गरेर जय पुकार्नु..... ने.सं. ६६८) ।

माथिका वर्णनहरूबाट नेपालमा रहीआएको सरस्वतीको मान्यता बारे स्पष्ट थाहा
हुन आउँछ । भारतमा वा पुराणहरूमा सरस्वतीलाई ब्रम्हाकी पत्नी आदि जुनसुकै रूपमा
मान्यता मिलेको होस् तर नेपालमा भने प्रामाणिक रूपमा चारसय वर्ष अघिदेखि नै सर-
स्वतीलाई विष्णुको पत्नीको रूपमा मानी आएको प्रमाण पाइन्छ । यसबाट यो मान्यता
अझ पुरानो थियो भन्न गाह्रो पर्दैन । किनभने कुनै पनि नयाँ मान्यतालाई व्यक्तिहरूले
अचानक एकपल्ट अंगीकार गर्दैनन् । कुनै न कुनै रूपमा धक र हिरहेको हुन्छ । त्यसैले पुराना
कुराहरूलाई निर्धक्क भएर मानेको हामी पाउँछौं । त्यसैले देवी सरस्वतीलाई नेपाली जन-
जीवनमा विष्णुकी पत्नीको रूपमा स्वीकार्दै आएको कुरालाई नकार्न सक्दैनौं ।

वाणी, काव्य, कला आदि विभिन्न शिल्पहरूका देवीको काव्यहरूमा विभिन्न
नामहरू छन् । वाणीकी देवी भएकी हुँदा वाक्देवी भनिएको पाइन्छ भने यिनलाई मारती,
आदि पनि भनिन्छ । --

‘अक्षमाला तथा वीणा पुस्तक च कमण्डलु ॥

नीलकण्ठी श्वेतभुजा श्वेताङ्गी चन्द्रशेखरा ।

महाविद्या महावाणी भारती च सरस्वती^{४०} ।

उपयुक्त श्लोक माथि विचार गर्ने हो भने नेपाली जनजीवनमा देवी सरस्वतीको स्तुति-मा भनिने ‘वीणा पुस्तक धारिणी’ पनि चरितार्थ भएको ज्ञात हुन्छ । यसबाट पहिले पहिले देवी सरस्वतीको कल्पनाको साथै उनको हातमा के हुनु पर्छ भन्ने निश्चित गरिसकेको थाहा हुन्छ । पुस्तकहरूमा सरस्वतीको चार हातमा विभिन्न वस्तुहरू लिइएको वर्णन गरिएको छ । ‘सप्तशती’ मा चारहात भएकी सरस्वतीको हातमा वीणा, पुस्तक, रुद्राक्षमाला र अंकुश हुन्छ भनिएको छ (पृ. १६६) ‘डेमलपमेण्ट अफ हिन्दू आइकोनोग्राफी’ मा चारहात भएको सरस्वतीको मूर्तिको हातहरूमा वीणा, पुस्तक, अक्षमाला र कमण्डलु आदि हुन्छ भनिएको छ ।

नेपालका सरस्वती मूर्तिहरूमा पनि माथि भनिएका साधनहरू देखापर्दछन् । कमलको फूल-मा बसेकी सरस्वतीको दायाँ हातमा रुद्राक्षमाला, देब्रेहातमा पुस्तक र अन्य दुइहातले वीणा समातेको देखाइन्छ । उभिएको सरस्वतीको मूर्ति भने केही भिन्न रूपमा प्रस्तुत गरिएको देखिन्छ । उभिएको सरस्वतीको मूर्तिमा वीणा भने हुँदैन । भारतमा भने उभिएको सरस्वतीको दुइ हातमा वीणा देखिन्छ । नेपालमा केही भिन्नता छ । अफ भन्ने हो भने उभिएका मूर्तिमा पनि एक रूपता छैन । कुनै मूर्तिमा खड्ग चक्र, सिन्धु र धातुको रेना देखाइन्छ (जयवागीश्वरीको मूर्ति) भने कुनैमा रुद्राक्ष, पुस्तक र मुद्राहरू देखाइएका छन् । (पाटन बालकुमारी) उभिएको सरस्वती मूर्तिहरू पनि नेपालमा पाइन्छन् । कैयौँ सरस्वती मूर्ति किबदन्तीको आधारमा चिनिन्छन् । किनभने यी सरस्वती मूर्तिमा सरस्वती मूर्तिहरूमा रहने विशेषता देखापर्दैनन् । यो कुरा माथि नै वर्णन गरिसकिएको छ ।

पहिले त दुइहाते सरस्वती हुँदैन भन्ने मेरो धारणा थियो । तर ठमेल भगवान् बहाल स्थित सउटा शिलापत्रमा त्यही नजीक रहेको मूर्तिलाई सरस्वती भनिएको बाट मेरो विचार निराधार सिद्ध भयो भन्न सकिने लाग्दैन । यहाँ सरस्वतीको दुवै हातमा कमलको फूल (सायद सेतो कमल होला, किनकि सरस्वतीलाई सेतो वर्ण, सेतो कमलमा बसेकी सेतो हाँस-वाहन भएको आदि भनिन्छ उदाहरण तल दिइन्छ) र फूल माथि दाहिने तर्फ रुद्राक्ष देब्रेतिर पुस्तक स्पष्ट देखिन्छ^{४१} । ‘प्रतिमा विज्ञान प्रतिमा लक्षणम्’ ले पनि दुइहाते सरस्वतीको वर्णन निम्न प्रकार गरेको छ --

‘अथवा द्विभुजं कुर्यात्कुन्तलं मुकुटं भवेत् ।

वक्षिणा वरदं हस्तं वामहस्ते च पद्मकम् ॥’ (प. २१६)

जे.एन. वनर्जीले आफ्नो पुस्तकमा विष्णुसँग उभिएकी देवी सरस्वती दुइ हात भएकी र हातमा वीणा र कमलको फूल लिएकी वर्णन गरेका छन् ।

उपर्युक्त वर्णनहरूबाट नेपालमा देवी सरस्वतीको मूर्ति एक किसिमको हैन भन्ने थाहा हुन्छ । फेरि सरस्वतीले लिने साधनहरू पनि एकै प्रकारको नभएको हुँदा सरस्वतीलाई कहिले काहीँ त्रिन्न पनि सुस्किर पर्छ । नेपाली जनजीवनमा सबभन्दा लोकप्रिय रही आएको सरस्वतीको आकृति वीणा, पुस्तक लिएकी र हाँस माथि चढेको हो । तर सबै ठाउँमा यस्तै नभई उभिएकी, चारहात भएकी र दुइहात भएकी समेत देखिने हुँदा फट्ट हर्दा कति ठाउँमा यो सरस्वतीको मूर्ति हो भनी ठम्याउन गाह्रो पर्छ । त्यसको लागि स्थानीय व्यक्तिहरूसँग सोधपूछ गर्नु पर्ने स्थिति आई पर्छ वा केही नभए देवीको मूर्तिको हातमा रहेको साधन तर्फ ध्यान दिनु पनि अत्यावश्यक हुन्छ ।

माथिका सम्पूर्ण कुराहरूमाथि विचार गर्ने हो भने नेपाली जनजीवनमा अनौठो धार्मिक समिश्रण रहेको कुरा थाहा हुन्छ । तात्कालिक समाजमा रहेको धर्मसहिष्णुताले एक धर्मका व्यक्तिलाई अर्को धर्ममा प्रवेश गर्न दिएको मात्र होइन कि एक धर्मको देव देवीलाई अर्को धर्मको देव देवीको रूपमा मान्ने परम्परा समेत चलायो । यस प्रकारको अनौठो धार्मिक भावना वा समानता हामी अन्य देशको धर्म संस्कृतिमा रहेको कम पाउँछौं । यो नेपालीहरूको आफ्नै प्रकारको संस्कृति हो । मंजुश्रीलाई सरस्वती मान्ने परम्पराले यसको पुष्टि गर्दछ ।

विद्या काव्य तथा साहित्यहरूकी देवी सरस्वतीलाई केटाकेटीको रक्षार्थ स्थापना गर्नु पनि नेपालीहरूको आफ्नै विशेषता हो^{४२} । हुनत पहिले पनि यो भावना रहेको हुन सक्छ, तर स्पष्ट थिएन । मल्लकालमा भने यो स्पष्ट भयो । यसबाट के अनुमान हुन्छ भने बुद्धधर्ममा केटाकेटीहरूको रक्षार्थ पूजा गरिने 'हारतीमाता' (अजिमा) को सट्टा हिन्दूहरूले सरस्वतीलाई नै उक्त अजिमाको रूपमा मान्न थालेका हुन् कि त ? यो अनुमान मात्र हो यसै हो भनी ठोकेर भने भन्न सकिन्न । यसरी सरस्वती देवीलाई नेपाली परम्परा वा जनताहरूले नयाँ रूपमा अपनाएका थिए वा कुन भन्न गाह्रो पर्दैन ।

जे भए पनि हिन्दू समाजमा वैदिक युगदेखि पूजित देवी सरस्वती प्रतिको भावना पछि गएर केही नौलो रूपमा समेत (विद्याकी देवीको साथै केटाकेटीको रक्षार्थ) लिइएको कुरा हामी नेपालको इतिहासको सिलसिलामा पाउँछौं ।

टिप्पणी

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मध्यकालिक नेपालका एक प्रख्यात राजा शिवदेव

(वि.सं. १९५६-१९८३)

धनवज्र वज्राचार्य *

‘नेपालसंवत्’ को शुरुदेखि अर्थात् वि.सं. ६३७ देखि नेपालको इतिहासमा मध्यकालको शुरु मानिएको छ । मध्यकालका शुरुका केही शताब्दीको इतिहास राम्ररी जान्न सकिएको छैन । हुनत यसताका लेखिएका केही हस्तलिखित ग्रन्थहरू पाइएका छन्; जनताले देवतास्थापना गर्दा धारा आदि बनाउँदा राखेका केही अभिलेखहरू पनि पाइएका छन्; गोपालवंशावली आदि वंशावलीमा पनि यस ताकाका राजाहरूबारे केही चर्चा परेको छ । यी सामग्रीहरूको आधारमा त्यस वेलाको इतिहास केही अंशमा जान्न सकिन्छ । तर प्राप्त सामग्रीहरूको पनि राम्ररी अध्ययन मनन नभइसकेको हुनाले मध्यकालका शुरुका केही शताब्दीको नेपालको इतिहास केही अस्पष्ट नै रहेको छ । यस हुँदा यस वेलाका कति ध्यान दिन लायक कुरामा पनि ध्यान जान सकेको छैन ।

मध्यकालको पूर्वार्धका नेपालका राजाहरूमा शिवदेवको उल्लेखनीय स्थान रहेको छ । यो कुरा गोपालवंशावलीबाट पनि थाहा पाइन्छ; प्राप्त अभिलेख, हस्तलिखित ग्रन्थबाट पनि थाहा पाइन्छ । विशेष गरी नेपालको अर्थव्यवस्थामा राजा शिवदेवको उल्लेखनीय योगदान रहेको थियो । साथै उनले केन्द्रको शासनलाई पनि एकचोटि फेरि मजबूत पारेथे । तर इतिहासकारहरूले यस कुरामा पर्याप्त ध्यान दिए जस्तो मलाई लाग्दैन । यस कुरामा यस निबन्धमा प्राप्त सामग्रीको आधारमा शिवदेवबारे केही लेख्ने प्रयास गर्दैछु ।

मध्यकालको नेपालको इतिहासमा प्रकाश पार्ने एक प्रमुख सामग्री गोपालवंशावली हो । गोपालवंशावलीमा पनि मध्यकालका शुरुका राजाहरूको वर्णन थोरै मात्र परेको छ । यी राजा शिवदेवको पालादेखि भने गोपालवंशावलीमा अलि बढ्ता विवरण दिइएको पाइन्छ । शुरुदेखि अर्थात् गोपालवंशी राजाहरूदेखि स्थितिमल्लसम्मका राजाहरूको संक्षिप्त चर्चा संस्कृत भाषामा गरेपछि ‘स्वस्तिः भूतवृत्तान्तर् लिखितन्व शृणु = अब मएका वृत्तान्त पनि सुन’ मनी अनि यी शिवदेवको जन्म आदिको वर्णन गोपालवंशावलीमा गरिएको छ । गोपालवंशावलीमा यी शिवदेवमन्दा अगाडिका राजाको जन्म आदिको तिथिमितिसहित वर्णन गरिएको छैन । यसबाट शिवदेवको विशिष्टताको भलक पाइन्छ । फेरि शिवदेवको जन्म,

*धनवज्र वज्राचार्य, नेपाल र एसियाली अनुसन्धान केन्द्रमा उप-प्राध्यापक हुनुहुन्छ ।

२०८ सि एन ए एस जर्नल, मोलम ८, नं. १ (डिसेम्बर १९८०)

मृत्युको उल्लेखकै सिलसिलामा उनमा 'कामरूपो भैरव अवतार' भन्ने विशिष्ट विशेषण गोपालवंशावलीकारले लगाएका छन्^१। यसबाट शिवदेवको व्यक्तित्व र देव विशिष्ट थिए; उनले आँटेर जुन काम गरे; त्यसले गर्दा उनी साधारण व्यक्ति थिएनन्; उनी भैरवका अवतार थिए भन्ने धारणा लोकमा जमेको देखिन्छ।

जन्म र राज्यकाल -

राजा शिवदेवको जन्म वि.सं. १११४ आषाढ कृष्ण प्रतिपदा बुधवारको दिन भएको थियो भन्ने कुरा गोपालवंशावलीबाट थाहा पाइन्छ। गोपालवंशावलीको मूल वाक्य यस प्रकारको छ -

“सम्बत् १७७ आषाढ कृष्ण प्रतिपदा उत्राषाढ नदात्र सुधियोग बुधवार श्रीसंक(र) देवस्य पुत्र श्रीशिवदेवस्य जात ।। राजा अस्त ६६ कामरूपो भैरव अवतारः।” (३१ पत्र)

यसबाट ने.सं. १७७ (वि.सं. १११४) मा शिवदेवको जन्म भएको हो; उनी ६६ वर्ष बाँचे अर्थात् ने.सं. २४६ (वि.सं. ११८३) सम्म जीवित रहे भन्ने थाहा पाइन्छ। साथै “श्रीसंक(र)देवस्य पुत्र श्रीशिवदेवस्य जात” भनिएको हुँदा यी शिवदेव प्रसिद्ध राजा शङ्करदेवको छोरा हुन् भन्ने उल्लेखनीय कुरा पनि यताबाट थाहा पाइन्छ। लेखेको गल्तीले मूलमा ‘शङ्करदेव’ मा ‘र’ छुटेको छ तापनि प्रसङ्गबाट उक्त कुरा सजिलैसँग बुझ्न सकिन्छ^२।

गोपालवंशावलीको वर्णनानुसार राजा हर्षदेवपक्षि ने.सं. २१६ मा शिवदेव गद्दीमा बसेका थिए। उनी त्यस बेला ४२ वर्षका थिए। शिवदेवले जम्मा २७ वर्ष ७ महीना राज्य गरे मनी गोपालवंशावलीकारले लेखेका छन्^३। यताबाट पनि शिवदेवको शासनकाल ने.सं. २४६ सम्म रह्यो भन्ने देखिन्छ। उपर्युक्त कुराको पुष्टि तात्कालिक हस्तलिखित ग्रन्थहरूबाट पनि हुन्छ। राजा हर्षदेवको पालाका हस्तलिखित ग्रन्थ ने.सं. २१७ सम्मका पाइएका छन्^४। ने.सं. २२१ देखि २४३ सम्मका अभिलेख, हस्तलिखित ग्रन्थमा शिवदेवको उल्लेख आएको छ^५। ने.सं. २४७ आषाढमा लेखिएको हस्तलिखित ग्रन्थमा शिवदेवका उत्तराधिकारीका रूपमा इन्द्रदेवको उल्लेख आएको छ^६। यसबाट गोपालवंशावलीकारले दिएको शिवदेवसम्बन्धी साल मिति मिलेका छन् भन्ने देखिन्छ।

शिवदेव र सिंहदेव -

राजा शिवदेवको शासनकालमा भएका राजनैतिक, आर्थिक र धार्मिक महत्त्वका कुराको चर्चा गर्नुभन्दा पहिले त्यस बेलाको एक समस्याको समाधानतिर दृष्टि दिनु आवश्यक छ जस्तो मलाई लाग्छ। गोपालवंशावलीको वर्णनानुसार हर्षदेवपक्षि शिवदेव राजा भए; उनले ने.सं. २१६ देखि ने.सं. २४६ सम्म जम्मा २७ वर्ष राज्य गरे; अनि इन्द्रदेव राजा भए भन्ने कुरा निश्चित छ। यस बीचमा सिंहदेवले राज्य गरेको संकेतसम्म पनि गोपालवंशावलीबाट पाइँदैन। तर यस बेलाका हस्तलिखित ग्रन्थहरूबाट भने सिंहदेवले यस बीच शासन गरेको

कुराको राम्ररी पुष्टि हुन्छ । एकातिर ने.सं. २२० देखि ने.सं. २४३ सम्मका शिवदेवको नामोल्लेख भएका अभिलेख, हस्तलिखित ग्रन्थहरू पाइन्छन् भने अर्कोतिर ने.सं. २३१ देखि ने.सं. २४२ सम्मका सिंहदेवको शासनकालमा लेखिएका हस्तलिखित ग्रन्थ पाइन्छन्^७ । साथै गोपालवंशावलीमा राजाका रूपमा सिंहदेवको उल्लेख परेको छैन तापनि युवराज महेन्द्रदेव, राजा आनन्ददेव, रुद्रदेव अमृतदेवका पिताका रूपमा सिंहदेवको उल्लेख आएको छ^८ । यसरी शिवदेव र सिंहदेव एक अर्काका प्रतिद्वन्द्वी शासक हुन् कि ती दुइ एकै व्यक्ति हुन् भन्ने समस्या उठेको छ । श्रीलुशियानो पेटेक आदि केही इतिहासकारले शिवदेव र सिंहदेव भिन्ना-भिन्नै शासक हुन् भन्ने कुरा देखाउने प्रयास गरेका छन्^९ । श्रीसिन्धु लेभीले भने शिवदेव र सिंहदेव एकै व्यक्ति हुन् भन्ने भाव व्यक्त गरेका थिए । निश्चित प्रमाणको अभाव हुनाले यो विवाद अहिले सर्वात्मना टुंगिदैन तापनि प्राप्त सामग्रीहरूको अध्ययन गरी हेर्दा शिवदेव र सिंहदेव एकै व्यक्ति हुन् भन्ने देखिएको छ । अब यस विषयमा यहाँ अलिकता लेख्नु-परेको छ ।

मध्यकालको पूर्वार्द्धदेखि हाम्रो यहाँ 'द्वैराज्य' अर्थात् संयुक्त शासन चलेको थियो^{१०} । यही परम्परामा शिवदेव र सिंहदेवको पनि द्वैराज्य अर्थात् संयुक्त शासन चलेको थियो कि भन्ने पनि अनुमान गर्न नसकिने होइन । तर प्राप्त सामग्रीहरू राम्ररी केलाउँदा हेर्दा यस वेला द्वैराज्य चलेको संकेत कतैबाट पाइँदैन । गोपालवंशावलीबाट पनि उक्त कुराको संकेत पाइँदैन; अभिलेख हस्तलिखित ग्रन्थहरूबाट पनि पाइँदैन । यसो हुँदा शिवदेव र सिंहदेव एकै व्यक्ति होइनन् भन्ने यी दुइमा सत्ता हात लिन कडा संघर्ष महरहेको हुनुपर्छ भन्ने निष्कर्ष निकाल्नु-पर्ने हुन्छ । तर शिवदेवको राज्यकालमा भएका आर्थिक विकास आदितिर दृष्टि दिँदा यस वेला अशान्ति थियो; सत्ता हात लिन संघर्ष महरहेको थियो भन्ने कुनै लडाइया देखा-पर्दैन । गोपालवंशावलीकारले शिवदेवप्रति जुन आदरभाव दर्शाएका छन्; उनी साधारण राजा होइनन्; भैरवका अवतार हुन् भनी जुन उद्गार व्यक्त गरेका छन्; त्यस्तातिर दृष्टि दिँदा पनि उपर्युक्त कुराको पुष्टि हुँदैन । शिवदेव र सिंहदेव एकै व्यक्ति हुन्; एकै व्यक्तिका ती दुइ नामान्तर मात्र हुन् भन्ने कुरा मानेको खण्डमा उक्त समस्याको समाधान स्वतः हुन्छ । एकै शासकका दुइ नामको प्रचलन इतिहासमा कुनै नौलो कुरा होइन । यस्ता उदाहरण अनेक पाइन्छन् । फेरि गोपालवंशावलीको वर्णनतिर यसो दृष्टि दियो भने शिवदेव र सिंहदेव एकै व्यक्तिका दुइ नाम हुन् भन्ने कुरा अनुमान गर्ने आधार नभएको पनि होइन । अब यस कुराको पुष्टिको लागि गोपालवंशावलीकारले 'द्रम्म' मुद्राको प्रचलन गरेको कुराको वर्णन गर्दा प्रयुक्त वाक्यतिर दृष्टि दिऔं । त्यहाँ यस्तो लेखिएको छ - 'राजा शिवदेव... तेन... स्वसिंहाकृति रूप्यद्रम्म व्यवहारा कृता'^{११} = राजा शिवदेवले आफ्नो सिंहको आकृति कुँदिए-को चाँदीका द्रम्मको व्यवहार चलाए । यहाँ द्रम्ममा सिंह कुँदाइएको मन्नाको लागि 'सिंहा-कृति' मात्र भने पुग्नेमा 'स्वसिंहाकृति' भनिएको कुरा निकै विचारणीय छ । आफ्नो सिंहको आकृति कुँदाइएको भन्ने यस उल्लेखबाट शिवदेवको अर्को नाम सिंहदेव पनि रहेछ र

२१० सि एन ए एस जर्नल, मोलम ८, नं. १ (डिसेम्बर १९८०)

द्रम्ममा सिंह कुंदाईदा 'स्वसिंहाकृति' मनियो मनी अनुमान गर्न गाह्रो हैन । पछिका लक्ष्मीनरसिंह, सिद्धिनरसिंह आदि मल्ल राजाका चाँदीका मुद्रामा 'लक्ष्मीनर' 'सिद्धिनर' यति अक्षर कुंदाईसकेपछि 'सिंह' चाहिँ अक्षरमा नकुंदाई 'सिंहाकृति' नै कुंदाइएको पनि पाउँछौं । त्यसै गरी शिवदेवले आफ्नो द्रम्म मुद्रामा 'सिंहाकृति' कुंदाउनमा आफ्नो अर्को नाम 'सिंहदेव' को प्रतिनिधित्वको लागि रहेछ भन्ने चाखलाग्दो संकेत यताबाट पाइन्छ ।

गोपालवंशावलीकारले नेपालका राजाहरूको वर्णनको सिलसिलामा सिंहदेवको चर्चा गरेका हैनन्; शिवदेवको मात्र त्यस सिलसिलामा चर्चा गरेका हुन् । तर युवराज महेन्द्रदेव र राजा आनन्ददेव, रुद्रदेव र अमृतदेवका पिताका रूपमा भने गोपालवंशावलीकारले सिंहदेवको उल्लेख आदरसाथ चार पटक गरेका हुन् । यसबाट 'सिंहदेव' यस नामदेखि गोपालवंशावलीकार अपरिचित थिएनन् भन्ने स्पष्ट छ । अतः सिंहदेव भिन्ने स्वतन्त्र राजा भएका भए गोपालवंशावलीकार र अरू वंशावलीकारहरूले पनि नेपालका राजाहरूको उल्लेखको सिलसिलामा नै सिंहदेवको पनि कुट्टो उल्लेख गर्नु थिए । तर शिवदेव र सिंहदेव एकै व्यक्ति हुँदा नेपालमा भएका राजाहरूको सूचीमा शिवदेवलाई संलग्न गरेपछि सिंहदेवको पनि उल्लेख स्वतः अनावश्यक हुँदा गोपालवंशावलीकारले सिंहदेवको पृथक् उल्लेख नगरेका हुन् भन्ने कुरा प्रसङ्गबाट थाहा पाइन्छ । यताबाट पनि सिंहदेव र शिवदेव एकै व्यक्ति हुन् भन्ने कुराको आभास पाइन्छ ।

अर्को कुरा, गोपालवंशावलीको संस्कृत भागमा र अर्को दोस्रो भागमा पनि शिवदेवको वर्णनको सिलसिलामा नै युवराज महेन्द्रदेवको उल्लेख गरिएको छ^{१२} । यसबाट युवराज महेन्द्रदेव राजा शिवदेवका नै छोरा हुन् भन्ने संकेत पाइन्छ । हुनत यस ताका दुइ राजकुलको अस्तित्व रहेको हुँदा गद्दीनशीन राजा एक वंशका भए युवराज अर्को वंशका घोषित गर्ने चलन पनि चलेको पाइन्छ^{१३} । यस कारण युवराज महेन्द्रदेव राजा शिवदेवकै छोरा हुन् भनी यति कुराको आधारमा ठोकेर भन्न सकिँदैन । तर पनि गोपालवंशावलीकारको वर्णनशैली हेर्दा युवराज महेन्द्रदेव राजा शिवदेवका नै छोरा हुन् भन्ने संकेत पाइन्छ । अर्कोतिर गोपालवंशावलीमा महेन्द्रदेवलाई 'सिंहदेव'का छोरा भनी स्पष्ट लेखिएको छ । यताबाट पनि शिवदेव र सिंहदेव एकै व्यक्ति हुन् भन्ने अनुमान गर्न सकिन्छ ।

जब आर्थिक समृद्धि, सांस्कृतिक उन्नति भएको हुन्छ; तब राजकाजमा स्थिरता, राष्ट्रमा शान्ति चैन रहेको हामी पाउँछौं । शिवदेवको शासनकालमा पनि आर्थिक समृद्धि, सांस्कृतिक उन्नति भएको देखिएको छ । शिवदेव र सिंहदेव भिन्नाभिन्ने एक अर्काका प्रतिद्वन्द्वी व्यक्ति भएका भए उपर्युक्त कुराको उल्टो उदाहरणको रूपमा लिनुपर्ने हुन्छ । त्यस बेला सत्ताको लागि संघर्ष चलिरहेथ्यो; राजनैतिक स्थिरता थिएन भन्ने निष्कर्ष निकाल्नु

पर्ने हुन्छ । तर शिवदेव र सिंहदेव एकै व्यक्ति हुन् भन्ने कुरा निश्चित जस्तै भएको हुँदा उक्त समस्याको समाधान भएको छ ।

आर्थिक विकास -

राजा शिवदेवबारे बुझ्ने ऐतिहासिक सामग्री धेरै प्राप्त हैनन् । गोपालवंशावली, केही हस्तलिखित ग्रन्थ र एक ताम्रपत्र मात्र प्राप्त छन् । तिनमा पनि शिवदेवबारे बढी प्रकाश पार्ने प्रमुख स्रोत त गोपालवंशावली नै हो । गोपालवंशावलीकारको वर्णनअनुसार शिवदेवको मुख्य देन आर्थिक विकास नै हो भन्ने थाहा पाइन्छ । एकातिर शिवदेवले पशुपतिनाथको मन्दिरमा सुनको हाना हाल्ने, चाँगुनारायणको जीर्णोद्धार गर्ने आदि निर्माणात्मक धार्मिक कार्य गरेका थिए^{१४} भने अर्कोतिर उनले जनतालाई पानीको सुबिधा होस् भनी ठाउँ ठाउँमा ढुङ्गे धारा, कुवा, पोखरीहरू बनाउन लाएका थिए । यस कुराको चर्चा गोपालवंशावलीकारले 'पनालिका कुप प्वस्करणि धाने स्थाने कृता' भनी गरेका छन्^{१५} । शिवदेवका छोरा युवराज महेन्द्रदेवले पनि एक ठूलो पोखरी बनाउन लाएथे । गोपालवंशावलीकारले संस्कृत र नेवारी दुवै भागमा यस निर्माणकार्यको चर्चा विशेष रूपमा गरेका छन्^{१६} । शिवदेवले एक 'राजदरबार' पनि बनाउन लाएथे^{१७} ।

कीर्तिपुर शहरको निर्माण -

धारा, पोखरी आदि जनोपयोगी निर्माणात्मक कामबाहेक शिवदेवले एक महत्त्वपूर्ण बस्ती बसाउने काम पनि गरेथे । त्यो हो; कीर्तिपुर शहरको निर्माण । यी शिवदेवको पालासम्ममा नेपाल उपत्यकाका तीन प्रसिद्ध शहर ललितपुर, कान्तिपुर, भक्तपुरको स्थापना भइसकेको थियो । यस कारण शिवदेवले नयाँ शहर बसाउने कुरा सोच्दा कीर्तिपुर मेकलाई रोजे । बस्ती बसाइको दृष्टिले कीर्तिपुर निकै प्राचीन बस्ती थियो । प्रचलित वंशावली-अनुसार गोपालवंशी राजाहरूको पालामै यतातिर केही बस्ती बसेको थियो भन्ने फल्किन्छ । हुन पनि कीर्तिपुरमा गोपाल (ग्वाला)हरूलाई सफाउने स्थल आदि अझै केही छन् । यस कारण कीर्तिपुर र आसपासमा बस्ती त गोपाल-युगमा नै बसिसकेको देखिन्छ । तर कीर्तिपुरलाई मध्यकालिक परिमाणाअनुसारको एक शहरको रूपमा बसाउने काम भने यी शिवदेवले गरेका हुन् । यो कुरा वंशावलीबाट थाहा पाइन्छ^{१८} । शिवदेवको कीर्ति फैलाउने कृति भएको हुनाले नै यस शहरको नामकरण 'कीर्तिपुर' भएको हो भन्ने पनि वंशावलीकारको भनाइ छ ।

'कीर्तिपुर' नामकरण हुनुभन्दा पहिले यस स्थानको नाम के रहेको थियो होला भनी अलिकता काट्याउनु यस प्रसङ्गमा मिल्दो देखिन्छ । हुन त कीर्तिपुरको अर्को नाम 'पद्म-काष्ठगिरि' भन्ने पनि नपाइने होइन । तर यो नाम पनि त्यति प्राचीन होइन भन्ने देखिएको छ । बरू कीर्तिपुरको पुरानो नाउँ 'गुदे' थियो भन्ने कुरा कीर्तिपुरका शिलालेख र अरू स्रोतबाट पनि देखिएको छ । उदाहरणार्थ कीर्तिपुरको पुरन्दरसिंहको पालाको ताम्रपत्रलाई देखाउन सकिन्छ^{१९} । विचारार्थ त्यसको उद्धरण यहाँ गर्नुपरेको छ -

२१२ सि एन ए एस जर्नल, मोलम ८, नं. १ (डिसेम्बर. १९८०)

१. ॐ स्वस्ति ।। सम्बत् ७०७ कार्तिक शुक्ल द्वादशी प्र त्रयोदश्यां
२. तिथौ उत्तरभाद्रपदात्रे व्याघाटयोगे शुक्रवासरे तस्मिन् दि-
३. वसे समस्तसुप्रसस्त्यलंकृतसद्विराजमान श्रीश्रीजयपुरन्द-
४. रसिंहदेवेन राज्ञा पालितायां श्रीकीर्तिपुर्यां श्रीगुदेस्थाना-
५. धिपति श्रीश्रीश्रीभीमसेनभट्टारकप्रासादोपरि स्वर्णकलश-
६. ध्वजारोहं भवति ।। यजमान जकेराज क्वाठनायकेन कृतमिति ।।

(कल्याण होस् । ने.सं. ७०७ (वि.सं. १६४३) कार्तिक शुक्ल द्वादशी उप्रान्त त्रयोदशी उत्तरभाद्रपदात्रे व्याघाटयोग शुक्रवारको दिन ।

सारा असल प्रशस्तिले खूपसंग सुहाएका राजा श्रीश्रीजयपुरन्दरसिंहदेवले पालना गरिए-
को श्रीकीर्तिपुरमा श्रीगुदेस्थानका अधिपति श्रीश्रीश्रीभीमसेन देवताको मन्दिरमाथि यजमान
क्वाठनायक (किलाका अधिकारी) जकेराजले सुनको गजुर र ध्वजा चढाए ।)

यहाँ कीर्तिपुर बाघभैरव (भीमसेन)को विशेषाण श्रीगुदेस्थानाधिपति मन्ने दिइएको
ह । आफ्नो इलाका, बस्तीका प्रसिद्ध देवतालाई त्यो ठाउँका 'अधिपति' का रूपमा
मान्ने चलन उहिले थियो । दोलखाका भीमसेनलाई दोलखाधिपति मनी लेखिएको हामी
पाउँछौं । दोलखाका अभिलेखमा यस कुराको उल्लेख आएको छ^{२०} । यसै गरी कीर्तिपुरका
भीमसेनलाई 'श्रीगुदेस्थानाधिपति' भनिएको हो । यसबाट कीर्तिपुर डाँडोको पुरानो
नाउँ 'गुदे' थियो भन्ने देखिएको छ । यस कुराको पुष्टि कीर्तिपुरको अरु अभिलेखबाट पनि
हुन्छ । साथै एक प्रसिद्ध किलाको रूपमा 'गुदे' को उल्लेख गोपालवंशावलीमा आएको छ ।
विचारार्थ त्यसको पनि उद्धरण यहाँ दिनुपरेको छ -

'स ३६२ द्विषाढा कृष्णाष्टमी गुन्देक्वाठ, गोह्नेक्वाठ चाल क्वाह्ने कितपाल भारोस
ज्वहो हाव ढिडो ।। श्रावन सुदि १ बन्धनमुक्ति' (३८ पत्र)

(ने.सं. ३६२ (वि.सं. १२६६) द्वितीय आषाढ कृष्णा अष्टमीको दिन गुन्देक्वाठ,
गोह्नेक्वाठ खुले; क्वाह्नेका भारादार कीर्तिपाललाई पक्रेर ल्याई कैद गरियो । श्रावण
शुक्ल प्रतिपदाको दिन कैदबाट मुक्त गरिए ।)

राजा अमयमल्लको पालामा भूकम्प, अनिकाल आदि प्राकृतिक प्रकोप हुनाको साथ
साथै आन्तरिक कलह पनि भएको थियो । त्यसै सिलसिलामा ललितपुर क्वाह्नेका भारादार
कीर्तिपालले कीर्तिपुरको गुन्दे किला र अर्को गोह्ने किला कब्जा गरी विद्रोह गर्न खोजेका
थिए । यसैले त्रिपुरले (केन्द्रले) कारबाह गरी गुन्दे किला, गोह्ने किला खुलाएको;
कीर्तिपाललाई पक्रि पक्रि छोडेको चर्चा माथि गोपालवंशावलीकारले गरेका हुन् । यस ताका
यी कीर्तिपाल निकै चल्तापूजा भई निस्किएका थिए । उनले तात्कालिक आन्तरिक कलहमा
निकै भाग लिएको उल्लेख गोपालवंशावलीमा परेको छ^{२१} । एक ठाउँमा उनलाई 'यह'
(पाटन)का भनी गोपालवंशावलीकारले स्पष्ट लेखेका छन् -

‘सम्बत् ३६१ जेष्ठ शुक्ल अष्टमी यम्बु याटुम्बहार क्वाठ चाल्यका, यहू कीर्तिपाल
मारोस(न)।।’ (३३ पत्र)

(ने.सं. ३६१ (वि.सं. १२६८) जेष्ठ शुक्ल अष्टमीको दिन, यम्बु याटुम्बहार (इटुम्बहार)
को किला पाटनका कीर्तिपाल मारोले खुलाए ।)

यसरी कीर्तिपाल मारो पाटनका हुनाले उनले कब्जा गरेको ‘गुन्दे’ क्वाठ कीर्तिपुरकै
हो भन्ने प्रसङ्गबाट खुल्नु आउँछ । जे होस्; कीर्तिपुरकै अभिलेखमा ‘गुन्दे’ को उल्लेख आएको
हुनाले कीर्तिपुरको पुरानो नाउँ ‘गुन्दे’ रहेछ भन्ने कुरामा शङ्का छैन ।

त्यस बेला कुनै पनि बस्ती ‘पुर’ (शहर) कहलाउन दुइ कुराको विशेषता हुनुपर्थ्यो ।
एक त सो बस्ती सुरक्षाको दृष्टिले मजबूत अर्थात् वनजंगल खाई, पखालि आदिले घेरिएको
‘गढ’ रूपको हुनुपर्थ्यो; दोस्रो कुरा सो बस्तीको सांस्कृतिक विकास पनि हुनुपर्थ्यो । अर्थात्
देवमन्दिरहरू, मण्डप आदि संस्कृतिका चोतक कुराहरू त्यहाँ हुनुपर्थ्यो । स्थितिमल्लको
पालामा लेखिएको अमरकोशको नेवारी टीका र अलि पछिको ‘सायन्तकोशसार’को टीकामा
‘पुर’को तात्कालिक परिमाण यही नै दिइएको छ^{२२} ।

राजा शिवदेवले पुरानो ‘गुन्दे’ बस्तीलाई ‘कीर्तिपुर’को रूप दिँदा उपर्युक्त साँचोम
ढालेको देखिन्छ । अर्थात् एकातिर कीर्तिपुर - डाँडोलाई वनजंगल, खाई, पखालि आदिले
घेरी ‘गढ’को रूप दिइयो भने अर्कोतिर यस बस्तीमित्र सांस्कृतिक विकास पनि गरेको बुझि-
न्छ । कीर्तिपुरमा वनजंगल, खाई, पखालि आदि गढका अवशेष अहिलेसम्म देखापर्छन् । देव-
मन्दिर, ढक्की घारा पोखरी देवदेवीको जात्रा आदि सांस्कृतिक कुराले कीर्तिपुर सानो
बस्ती भए पनि अझै निकै समृद्ध रहेको छ । यसको मुख्य श्रेय राजा शिवदेवलाई नै छ ।
शिवदेवले कीर्तिपुर शहर बसाएको वर्णन माणावशावलीमा परेको छ । गोपालवशावलीकारले
कीर्तिपुर शहर बसाएको कुरा सोभै स्पष्ट रूपमा लेखेका छैनन्; कीर्तिपुरनजीकको ‘बलु’
सोलामा शिवदेवले बाँध बाँध्न लाएको कुरालाई भने गोपालवशावलीकारले जोड दिई लेखेका
छन् -

‘तत कीर्तिमगतापुरे बलुदेवी तप कृत्य नन्दि बन्ध्याय नीता’ (२४ पत्र)

(अनि कीर्तिपुरमा देवीको तपस्या गरी ‘बलु’ नदीमा बाँध बाँधे ।)

यसबाट राजा शिवदेवले कीर्तिपुर शहर मात्र बसाएका होइनन्; सो शहरका बासिन्दा-
लाई अन्न उत्पादन वृद्धि गर्न सुविधा होस् भनी बलु सोलामा बाँध बाँध्ने उल्लेखनीय काम
पनि गरेका रहेछन् भन्ने थाहा पाइन्छ । लिच्छविकालदेखि नेपालका राजाहरूले आकाश-
सेतीको मात्र भर पर्न नपरोस्; सेती गर्न सुविधा होस् भनी कुलोको बन्दोवस्त गरिदिएको
हामी पाउँछौं^{२३} । तर सोभै नदीमा बाँध बाँधेको यस्तो उल्लेख भने पाइएको छैन । यस
कारण राजा शिवदेवको यस प्रयासको ऐतिहासिक महत्त्व रहेको स्पष्ट छ । बलुमा सो
बाँध कहाँनिर कसरी बाँधिएको थियो भन्ने कुराचाहिँ पत्ता लाग्न सकेको छैन ।

नयाँ मुद्राको प्रचलन -

राजा शिवदेवले उठाएको अर्को उल्लेखनीय कदम नयाँ मुद्राको प्रचलन हो । उनले नयाँ मुद्रा 'द्रम्म' 'शिवका' 'द्रम्मशिवका' चलाएथे । यस कुराको चर्चा गोपालवंशावलीकारले राम्ररी गरेका छन् -

'पूर्व द्रम्म व्यवहार नास्ति सुवर्णरक्तिकास्त व्यवर्तते । स्वश्रीसिंहाकृति रूप्य द्रम्म व्यवहारा कृता । सुवर्णमयी श्रीशिवस्याकृति शिवकाङ्क कृत्यः॥' (२४ पत्र)

यसबाट 'द्रम्म' मुद्रा नेपालमा यी शिवदेवले चलाएका हुन् भन्ने प्रमाणित हुन्छ । यस प्रसङ्गमा गोपालवंशावलीकारले लेखेको 'पूर्व द्रम्मव्यवहार नास्ति = यसभन्दा पहिले यहाँ द्रम्मको प्रचलन भएको थिएन' भन्ने कुरा विचारणीय छ । शिवदेवभन्दा पहिले यहाँ 'द्रम्म'को प्रचलन नभएको भए कुन मुद्रा त्यसवेला प्रचलित थियो भन्ने प्रश्न उठ्छ । तात्कालिक ताडपत्र आदि सामग्री केलाउँदा भने शिवदेवभन्दा पहिले अर्थात् मध्यकालको शुरु शुरुमा यहाँ लिच्छविकालदेखि प्रचलित मुद्राको नै प्रचलन थियो भन्ने थाहा पाइन्छ । लिच्छविकालमा यहाँ पुराण, काष्ठापिण, पण र पणपुराण नामक मुद्रा प्रचलित थिए । यो कुरा लिच्छविकालका अभिलेखबाट थाहा पाइन्छ^{२४} । यी पुराण आदि मुद्रा के कस्ता थिए भन्ने खुल्लो विवरण पाउन सकिएको छैन । तर लिच्छविकालका मुद्रामा 'पुराण' माथिल्लो तहको देखिन्छ । 'पुराण' चाँदीको हुन्थ्यो । लिच्छविकालमा सबभन्दा बढी प्रचलित मुद्राचाहिँ 'पण' हो । 'पण' तामाको हुन्थ्यो । 'ताम्रिक पण' भनी अभिलेखमा खुलाएर लेखिएको पनि पाइन्छ । १६ पण बराबर एक 'काष्ठापिण' हुन्थ्यो । थानकोटको भीमार्जुनदेव र जिष्णुगुप्तको अभिलेखबाट यो कुरा प्रमाणित हुन्छ^{२५} । अब १६ पण बराबरको मुद्रालाई किन काष्ठापिण भनियो भन्ने कुराको पनि यस प्रसङ्गमा अलिकति विचार गर्नुपर्नेछ । कुनै पनि नाप, परिमाणको चार खण्डको एक खण्डलाई संस्कृतमा 'कर्ण' भनिन्छ^{२६} । यो कुरा खेतको परिमाणलाई बुझाउँदा पनि लागू हुन्थ्यो; पदार्थको नाप तौलमा पनि लागू हुन्थ्यो । यताबाट 'काष्ठापिण' (कर्णरूपको पण) बारे विचार गर्न मद्दत पाइन्छ । 'काष्ठापिण' कुनै ठूलो मुद्राको चार खण्डको एक खण्ड रूपको (कर्ण रूपको) मुद्रा रहेछ भन्ने यताबाट थाहा पाइन्छ । प्रसङ्ग विचार गर्दा भने त्यो ठूलो मुद्रा 'पुराण' हो भन्ने कुरामा शङ्का हुँदैन । यताबाट 'पुराण' चार काष्ठापिणबराबरको अर्थात् १६×४ = ६४ पण बराबरको मुद्रा रहेछ भन्ने उल्लेखनीय संकेत पाइन्छ । यसै परम्परामा पहिलेसम्म पनि एक रूपियाको ६४ पैसा अर्थात् १६ आनाको एक रूपिया दर हाफ्रो यहाँ कायम भएको देखिन्छ । हाफ्रो यहाँ २५ आना अर्थात् १०० पैसाको १ रूपिया दर चन्द्रशमशेरको पालामा मात्र कायम भएको हो । त्यो भन्दा पहिले १६ आना अर्थात् ६४ पैसाको १ रूपिया हुन्थ्यो । बरु चाँदी र तामाको माउको तलमाथिले गर्दा कहिलेकहीँ उक्त दरमा थोरैबहुत तलमाथि चाँहिँ हुन्थ्यो । यसो हुँदा घटीमा ५६ पैसासम्म ओर्लेको उदाहरण पनि पाइन्छ^{२७} । तर

साधारणतः ६४ पैसाको नै एक रूपियां दर नै कायम भएको पाइन्छ । पुराणको प्रचलन बन्द भएपछि प्रचलित चाँदीको 'द्रम्म'को दर पनि ६४ तामाको द्रम्म (पैसा) नै रहेको अनुमान हुन्छ ।

अब अगाडि बढ्नु भन्दा पहिले शिवदेवमन्दा अगाडि अर्थात् मध्यकालको शुरू शुरूसम्म यहाँ कुन मुद्रा प्रचलित थियो भन्ने कुरा केलाउनुपरेको छ । यस विषयमा पाटन ह्रस्वर्म-महाविहारमा प्राप्त ताडपत्रहरूबाट निकै प्रकाश पर्छ । त्यहाँ मध्यकालका शुरू शुरूका ताड-पत्रहरू पनि पाइएका छन् । ती ताडपत्रहरू कैलाह है-याँ भन्ने शिवदेवले नयाँ मुद्रा 'द्रम्म'को प्रचलन गर्नुभन्दा पहिले यहाँ पण, पुराण र पणपुराण मुद्राहरू नै प्रचलित थिए भन्ने थाहा पाइन्छ । उदाहरणार्थ ती ताम्रपत्रहरूको सम्बद्ध अंशको उद्धरणसहित यहाँ यसबारे अलिकता चर्चा गर्नुपरेको छ । ने.सं. १०३ मार्गको एक ताडपत्रमा तीन रोपनी खेत दुइ शय पणपुराणमा दिइएको कुरा यसरी उल्लिखित छ - 'सम्बत् १०३ मार्गशिर शुक्ल दिवा--- त्रिरोपनिकाक्षोत्रम् च तत्त्वस्तुवत्वकत्वेनोद्दिश्य पणानाम्पुराण शतद्वय'^{२८} । ने.सं. १२१ को अर्को ताडपत्रमा पाँच रोपनी खेत १०५ पणपुराणमा बन्धकी राखिएको कुरा परेको छ - 'एतन्मध्ये पञ्चरोपणिकं क्षोत्रं दिवाकरजीवमहीजीवाभ्यां कृष्यमानं तस्य मूल पिण्ड धा मा ३ एतद्वस्तु त्रयमाणिकमात्रम् प्ल वणाविधिवत्वकमुद्दिश्य पणपुराण पञ्चाधिकशतमेकम् --- पण पु १०५ पिण्डभोगवृद्ध्या'^{२९} । यसै गरी तात्कालिक ताडपत्रमा पण, पणपुराण मुद्राको प्रचलन हामी पाउँछौं । शिवदेवद्वारा नयाँ मुद्रा द्रम्म, शिवकाको प्रचलन गरेको केही काल-पक्षिसम्म पनि पण, पणपुराण आदि मुद्रा केही अंशमा प्रचलित रहेथे । तर क्रमशः यी मुद्राको प्रचलन छुट्यो । यसको स्थान द्रम्म, शिवका, द्रम्मशिवका आदि मुद्राले लिए । तात्कालिक सामग्रीमा द्रम्मको उल्लेख ने.सं. २६४ को ताडपत्रमा आएको छ^{३०} । यसै ताकाको ने.सं. २६२ को अभिलेखमा 'शिवका'को उल्लेख आएको छ^{३१} । द्रम्म मुद्राको प्रचलन महेन्द्र-मल्लले रूपियां (महेन्द्रमल्ली) नक्लाएसम्म नै रहेको पाइन्छ ।

'द्रम्म'को अपभ्रंश 'दाम' हुनाले 'द्रम्म' मुद्रा तामाको मात्र थियो कि भनी केही इतिहासकारले अनुमान गरेका छन् । तर 'द्रम्म' चाँदीको पनि थियो । गोपालवंशावली-कारले शिवदेवले चलाएको नयाँ मुद्राको चर्चा गर्दा 'रूप्य दम्म' भनी स्पष्ट रूपमा चाँदीको द्रम्मको चर्चा गरेका छन् । स्थितिमल्ल ताकाको लेनदेन टिपिएको एक ताडपत्रमा लेखिएको ग्रन्थमा 'वोहया द्रम्म' भनी चाँदीको द्रम्मको चर्चा गरिएको छ । अरिमल्ल, अमयमल्लको पालामा महामारी अनिकाल पदा भएको ठूलो महंगीको चर्चा गर्दा गोपालवंशावलीकारले 'द्रम्मेन कुह्वद्वयतण्डुलम्' = एक द्रम्मले दुइ कुरा मात्र चामल पाइने भयो; 'सम्बत् ३४० कार्तिक ज्येष्ठटो दम्मेन तेवहि धारे के दुमिख जुवः' भनी लेखेका छन्^{३२} । यताबाट पनि 'द्रम्म' मुद्रा चाँदी थियो होला भनी सजिलैसँग अनुमान गर्न सकिन्छ ।

२१६ सि एन ए एस जर्नल, भोलम ८, नं. १ (डिसेम्बर १९८०)

राजा शिवदेवपक्षि उनका उत्तराधिकारी राजाहले पनि 'द्रम्म' मुद्राको नै प्रचलन गर्दै गए । यस कुराको संकेत पनि गोपालवंशावलीबाट पाइन्छ । राजा अनन्तमल्लको पालामा यहाँ आन्तरिक कलह र बाह्य आक्रमण आदिले गर्दा आर्थिक अवस्थामा पनि असर परेको थियो । यसैले शायद राजा अनन्तमल्लले चाँदीमा तामा मिसाई 'द्रम्म'को प्रचलन गरेका थिए । यसै हुँदा 'द्रम्म'को अवमूल्यन भयो र प्रजाले दुःख पाए भन्ने कुरा "राजा श्रीअनन्तमल्लदेव वर्षा ३२ मा १० तेन कृत द्रम्मव्यवहारेण प्रजा कष्टीभवति" भनी गोपाल-वंशावलीकारले बोलेका छन्^{३३} ।

राजा शिवदेवले चलाएको 'शिवका' मुद्राचाहिँ सुनको थियो । यो कुरा गोपाल-वंशावलीकारले 'सुवर्णमयी श्रीशिवस्याकृति शिवकादङ्क कृत्य' भनी स्पष्ट शब्दमा लेखेका छन् । 'शिवका' मुद्रामा श्रीशिवको आकृति कुँदाइएको थियो भन्ने उल्लेखनीय संकेत पनि यताबाट पाइन्छ । महादेवलाई लक्ष्म्य गरी शिवदेवले चलाएको यस मुद्राको नाम 'शिवका' रहनु उचित देखिए तापनि यो नामकरण भारतीय 'शिवका'को प्रभावमा परी गरिएको अनुमान हुन्छ । जे होस्; शिवदेवले चलाएको अर्को मुद्रा 'शिवका' पनि हो । 'शिवका' पूर्णरूपको मुद्रा नभई 'सुकी' रूपको (चौथाइपरिमाणको) मुद्रा हो भन्ने देखिन्छ । यसैले पक्षि वंशावली-कारले शिवदेवको चर्चा गर्दा उनले 'सुकी' चलाए भनी लेखिएको पाइन्छ^{३४} ।

आश्चर्यको कुरा, चार शताब्दीभन्दा बढी समयसम्म चलनचल्तीमा रहेको द्रम्म, शिवका, द्रम्मशिवका मुद्रा हालसम्म एउटा पनि पाइएको छैन । तात्कालिक ताडपत्र, हस्तलिखित ग्रन्थ, अभिलेख आदिमा द्रम्म, शिवका, द्रम्मशिवका मुद्राको उल्लेख भने प्रशस्त मात्रामा पाउँदछौं । तर उक्त मुद्रा हालसम्म एउटा पनि नपाइएको हुनाले यसबारे प्रमाणिक रूपमा राम्ररी प्रकाश पार्न सकिएको छैन । नेपालको मौद्रिक अध्ययनको दौत्रमा यो एक ठूलो कमजोरीको रूपमा रहेको स्पष्ट छ ।

धार्मिक दौत्रमा केही नयाँ मोड -

लिच्छविकालदेखिकै नेपालका विशिष्ट राजाहरूसरह यी राजा शिवदेव पनि धार्मिक दौत्रमा निकै उदार थिए । व्यक्तिगत रूपमा उनको शैवधर्म प्रति विशेष श्रद्धा थियो तापनि उनी वैष्णव र बौद्ध प्रति पनि उत्तिकै उदार थिए । एकातिर उनी पशुपतिनाथको मन्दिरमा सुनको छाना हाल्न लाउँछन्; चाँदीको कमल चढाउँछन्; आफूले नयाँ चलाएको मुद्रामा महादेवको आकृति कुँदाउँछन्; त्यस मुद्राको नाम 'शिवका' राख्न लाउँछन्; प्रख्यात शङ्कराचार्यद्वारा आफ्ना छोराहरूलाई दीक्षा दिलाउने प्रबन्ध गर्छन्; यसरी उनी पूरा शिवभक्त देखापर्छन् भने अर्कोतिर उनी नेपालका प्रख्यात वैष्णव देवता चाँगुनारायणको जीर्णोद्धार गराउँछन्; साथै बौद्ध धर्ममा पनि उत्तिकै उदारता देखाएका हुनाले उनलाई 'परमसौगत' (बुद्धका ठूला उपासक) पदवीले जनता विभूषित पाउँछन्^{३५} । यसरी धार्मिक

सहिष्णुताको हाम्रो गौरवमय परम्पराको अनुसरण राजा शिवदेवले गरेको हामी पाउँछौं ।

यसरी धार्मिक उदारता राजा शिवदेवमा थियो तापनि व्यक्तिगत रूपमा शैवधर्मप्रति उनको विशेष श्रद्धा थियो । यसले गर्दा धार्मिक द्रोत्रमा केही नयाँ मोडले प्रश्रय पाउन थाले- थ्यो । तात्कालिक धार्मिक इतिहासको दृष्टिले यसको केही महत्त्व रहेको हुनाले यसको अलिकता चर्चा यहाँ गर्नुपरेको छ ।

शङ्कराचार्यको नेपाल आगमन -

नेपालमा शङ्कराचार्यको आगमनबारे इतिहासकार अलि अलमलिएको हामी पाउँछौं । प्रसिद्ध शङ्कराचार्यको यहाँ आगमनको कुनै प्रमाण नपाइने हुनाले वंशावलीकारको वर्णनमा कुनै सत्यता हैन मन्ने अनुमान प्रायः इतिहासकार गर्दछन् । तर शङ्कराचार्यको आगमन यहाँ भएको रहेछ; उनको आगमनले यहाँको धार्मिक द्रोत्रमा केही नयाँ मोड पनि आएको रहेछ । यो कुरा ने.सं. २६२ (वि.सं. ११६६) को हाल नेपाल संग्रहालय छाउनीमा रहेको अभिलेखबाट पत्ता लागेको छ^{३६} । ती शङ्कराचार्य प्रसिद्ध आथ शङ्कराचार्य नमस्तर 'आमर्दक' मठपरम्पराका शङ्कराचार्य रहेछन् । उनी प्रयाग र काशीमा बस्दथे । प्रायः गरि काशीमै बढी बस्तथे; ती शङ्कराचार्य द्वैतवादी थिए; योग र तान्त्रिक पद्धतिको अनुसरण गर्दथे; मक्तहल्लाई दीक्षा दिन्थे । ती शङ्कराचार्य 'रुद्रशैव' मनी कहलाएका थिए । ती शङ्कराचार्य सरानी बस्दथे; साँढे पनि चढ्दथे । इत्यादि वर्णन छाउनीको उक्त अभिलेखमा गरिएको छ । ती शङ्कराचार्य दुइ पटक नेपाल उपत्यकामा आसथे । पहिलो पल्ट आई उनले यहाँ आफ्नो शैवमतको निकै प्रचार गरे; शास्त्रार्थ गरे; निकै अनुयायीहरू बनाए; प्रशस्त अर्थ-दक्षिणा पनि पाए । काशी फर्केर गई उनले काशीमा उक्त अर्थद्वारा दुइटा मन्दिर निर्माण गराए । केही कालपछि फेरि दोस्रो पटक ती शङ्कराचार्य नेपाल आए । दोस्रो पटकको उनको यात्रा फन् प्रभावकारी रह्यो । उनले यहाँ थुप्रै मक्तहल्लाई दीक्षा दिने काम गरेथे । त्यसै प्रसङ्गमा राजा शिवदेवका छोरा राजकुमार आनन्ददेव र अरू राजकुमार-हल्लाई पनि उनले दीक्षा दिस्थे । यसरी ती शङ्कराचार्य नेपालका राजधरानाका पनि गुरु बन्न पुगे । राजकुमारहल्लाई पनि दीक्षा दिन समर्थ भएका हुँदा यसबाट उनलाई आर्थिक लाम पनि निकै भएथ्यो । सो धनले पशुपतिनाथको मन्दिरको जीर्णोद्धार गर्ने काम ती शङ्कराचार्यले गरास्थे^{३७} । साथै पशुपतिनाथको पूजाआजामा तान्त्रिक पद्धतिले पनि प्रश्रय त्यस बेलादेखि पाउन थालेथ्यो ।

दोस्रो पटक शङ्कराचार्य यहाँ आउँदा राजा शिवदेवको मृत्यु महसुसको थियो । तर पहिलो पल्टको यात्रामा भने यहाँ राजा शिवदेव थिए कि मन्ने देखिएको छ । यद्यपि पहिलो यात्राको निश्चित मितिको उल्लेख उक्त अभिलेखमा परेको हैन । तर प्रसङ्ग हेर्दा त्यस बेला राजा शिवदेव थिए मन्ने अनुमान हुन्छ । राजा शिवदेवको शैवधर्मप्रति विशेष झुकाव हुनामा तिनै शङ्कराचार्यको यात्राको प्रभाव परेको देखिन्छ । जे होस्;

२१८ सि एन ए एस जर्नल, मोलम ८, नं. १. (डिसम्बर १९८०)

राजा शिवदेवको पालादेखि यहाँ धार्मिक द्रोत्रमा केही नयाँ मोड आएको अर्थात् तान्त्रिक प्रभाव बढेको कुरामा शङ्का हैन ।

नेपाल राष्ट्रको अखण्डता -

राजा शिवदेवको पालाको एक ताम्रपत्र पाइएको छ । ने.सं. २२१ (वि.सं. ११५७) को सो ताम्रपत्र सानो मए पनि अनेक दृष्टिले उल्लेखनीय छ । एक त अहिलेसम्म नेपालभित्र पाइएका ताम्रपत्रमा यो सबभन्दा पुरानो हो^{३८} । साथै सो ताम्रपत्र राजधानी नेपाल-उपत्यकामा कुँदाइएको नभई उपत्यकाबाहिर 'मंग्वरविषय'मा कुँदाइएको हो । तात्कालिक प्रशासन व्यवस्था आदि अनेक कुरामा त्यस अभिलेखले प्रामाणिक रूपमा केही प्रकाश पार्छ । सबभन्दा महत्त्वपूर्ण कुरा त्यस वेलासम्म नेपालराष्ट्र त्यति टुक्रिसकेको थिएन । कमसेकम मगरात प्रदेशसम्म केन्द्रकै प्रभुत्व कायमै थियो भन्ने कुरा उक्त ताम्रपत्रबाट थाहा पाइन्छ । विचारार्थ पहिले त्यस ताम्रपत्रको उद्धरण यहाँ दिनुपरेको छ -

- “ १. शुभमस्तु । सम्वत् २२१ माग्सुक्लदशम्या । राजाधिराज परमे-
२. श्वरः श्रीमत शिवदेवमहाराजै । श्रीरामदीव समन्त विजयराजै ।
३. मंग्वरविषये । फौटेश्वरमट्टारकास ताडेगोठिपन्चालिकेणः हेप-
४. रम् ग्वण्ड ओ फलेम् ।। श्रीइदामावो नायक । श्रीधक्नप नायक । श्रीसोह-
५. वराने । एते पधाण वत्तनीय ।”

(कल्याण होस् । ने.सं. २२१ (वि.सं. ११५७) मार्ग शुक्ल दशमीको दिन, राजा-धिराज परमेश्वर श्रीशिवदेवको राज्यकालमा, सामन्त श्रीरामदेवको विजयराज्यमा, मंग्वर विषय (जिल्ला) मा, फौटेश्वर मट्टारक्लाई ताडेका गोष्ठी र पान्चालीका सदस्यहरूले हेपर (तोरणविशेष) र --- चाँदीको कमल चढाए । श्रीइदामावो नायक, श्रीधक्नप नायक र श्रीसोहव राना, यी प्रधानहरूले यसको हेरचाह गरी चलाउनु ।)

यो ताम्रपत्र 'मंग्वर-विषय' मा कुँदाइएको हो । यसो हुँदा नेपाल मण्डलको मूल गद्दीमा बसेको राजा शिवदेवको पहिले उल्लेख गरी त्यसपछि 'मंग्वर' विषयका सामन्त रामदेवको उल्लेख यसमा गरिएको छ । राजा शिवदेवको प्रशस्ति 'राजाधिराज परमेश्वर' दिइएको छ । जुन गद्दीनशीन राजालाई जनाउने अधिदेखि प्रचलित प्रशस्ति हो । सामन्त रामदेवमा विशेष प्रशस्ति जोडिएको हैन तापनि उनको 'विजयराज्य'मा मनिएको हुनाले स्थानीय प्रशासन उनकै प्रभुत्वमा थियो भन्ने थाहा पाइन्छ । बाटो-घाटोको कठिनाइ आदि कारणले गर्दा नेपालको प्रशासनव्यवस्थामा प्राचीन कालदेखि नै 'सामन्तप्रथा'ले महत्त्वपूर्ण स्थान लिइथ्यो । लिच्छविकालमा केन्द्रीय शासन मजबूत थियो । तर त्यस वेला पनि सामन्तहरूको अस्तित्व त्यतिकै रहेको थियो । सामन्त शासकहरू केन्द्रका शासकको आज्ञा मानी शासन गर्दथे तापनि स्थानीय प्रशासनमा उनीहरू निकै स्वतन्त्र हुन्थे ।

यसरी लिच्छविकालदेखि नै केन्द्रद्वारा शासन गरिएको प्रदेश र सामन्तद्वारा शासन गरिएको प्रदेश गरी नेपाल-मण्डल दुइ खण्डमा विभक्त थियो । मध्यकालमा पुगेपछि यसमा केही अन्तर आउन थाल्यो । अब विभिन्न विषय (जिल्ला)का विषयपतिहरू पनि पुस्तैनी अधिकार पाएका सामन्तरूपका हुन थाले । यसरी अधिका विषयहरू अब क्रमशः सामन्त राज्यका रूपमा परिणत हुन थालेथे^{३६} ।

यस ताका नेपाल-मण्डलमित्र जिग्लोद्गमविषय, गण्डीगुल्मविषय, पन्नगविषय, पञ्चावतदेशविषय, उदयपुरविषय, वनियध्यविषय, खलपिंविषय, फनपिंविषय आदि 'विषय' (जिल्ला)हरू थिए^{४०} । तिनमध्ये एक 'मंग्वरविषय' पनि हो । 'मंग्वर' यो शब्द 'मगर' शब्दको पूर्वरूप हो भन्ने कुरामा शंङ्का छैन । हाम्रो यहाँ मध्यनेपालको अर्थात् गण्डकीप्रस्रवण क्षेत्रको केही इलाका 'मंगरात' भनेर पछिसम्म नै प्रचलित थियो । यही परम्पराअनुसार नवनेपालका निर्माता श्री ५ पृथ्वीनारायण शाहसम्मले 'मंगरातका राजा त मै हुँ' भन्ने भाव आफ्नो दिव्योपदेशमा व्यक्त गरेका छन् । यसरी 'मंग्वरविषय' मंगरात प्रदेशमित्र रहेको थियो भन्ने कुरा प्रसङ्गबाट थाहा पाइन्छ । अर्को कुरा, पन्नग-विषय र धवलस्रोतपुरसँग मंग्वरविषयको सीमा जोडिएको थियो भन्ने पनि देखिएको छ । यताबाट पनि 'मंग्वर' विषयको पहिचान गर्न मदत पाइन्छ ।

यसरी मंगरातभेकसम्म राजा शिवदेवको आधिपत्य कायम थियो; त्यस वेलासम्म नेपाल राष्ट्र त्यति टुक्रिसकेको थिएन भन्ने कुराको फलकं माथिको ताम्रपत्रबाट पाइन्छ । त्यसै गरी एक हस्तलिखित ग्रन्थ राजा शिवदेवको पालामा 'उदयपुर'मा लेखिएको पाइएको छ^{४१} । यसबाट पनि उक्त कुराको केही पुष्टि हुन्छ ।

उत्तराधिकारीको क्रममा परिवर्तन गर्ने प्रयास -

आर्थिक, धार्मिक आदि कुरामा राजा शिवदेवले ल्याएको परिवर्तनबारे माथि 'केही' लेखियो । त्यसै गरी तात्कालिक राजकाजमा समेत केही परिवर्तन ल्याउने प्रयास राजा शिवदेवले गर्न सोजेको आभास पाइन्छ । यस विषयमा पनि अलिकता लेख्नु आवश्यक सम्झन्छु ।

लिच्छविकालमा नेपालमा 'द्वैराज्य' पद्धति चलेको पाइँदैन । मध्यकालको शुल्देखि भने नेपालमा 'द्वैराज्य' शासनपद्धति कायम भएको हामी पाउँछौं । 'द्वैराज्य' पद्धतिमा गद्दीका हकदार दुइ वा दुइभन्दा बढी पनि हुन सक्छन् । अर्थात् एक किसिमको संयुक्त शासनपद्धति यो हो । 'द्वैराज्य' पद्धतिमा बाबु छोराको संयुक्त शासन पनि चलन सक्दथ्यो; दाजु भाइहरूको संयुक्त शासन पनि चलन सक्दथ्यो । साम्ना भावना हुँदा कहिलेकहीं यस पद्धतिले केही राम्रो नतीजा पनि निकाल्यो तापनि प्रायः दाजु भाइहरूमा संघर्षको वातावरण नै यस पद्धतिले बढी खडा गरेको पाइन्छ^{४२} । यो कुरा राजा शिवदेवले पनि महसूस

२२० सि एन ए एस जर्नल, मोलम ८, नं. १ (डिसेम्बर १९८०)

गरेको बुझिन्छ । यसै हुँदा उनले आफ्ना छोराहरूलाई संयुक्त रूपमा होइन कि एक माइको शेषापछि अर्को माइ राजा बन्ने निर्देशन दिई गएको बुझिन्छ । किनभने शिवदेवका छोराहरू आनन्ददेव, रुद्रदेव र अमृतदेवहरूले 'दैराज्य' रूपमा अर्थात् संयुक्त रूपमा शासन गरेका थिएनन्; दाजुको शेषापछि माइले क्रमशः शासन चलाएथे । एक माइको शेषापछि अर्को माइ गद्दीमा बस्ने यस्तो रोलक्रमको उदाहरण यसमन्दा अगाडि पनि पाइँदैन; पछाडि पनि पाइँदैन । यो प्रयोग निकै सफल पनि मर्थ्यो । यस ताका नेपालको केन्द्रीय शासन एक पटक फेरि मजबूत मर्थ्यो । यो राजा शिवदेवकै नयाँ प्रयोग थियो कि मन्ने देखिएको छ ।

राजा शिवदेवबारे जान्नुपर्ने अनेक कुरा सामग्रीको अभावले गर्दा अझै जान्न सकिएको छैन । तर थाहा पाइएका माथिका केही कुराबाट मध्यकालको नेपालको इतिहासमा राजा शिवदेवको महत्त्वपूर्ण स्थान रहेको थियो मन्ने कुरामा कुनै शङ्का छैन मन्ने मलाई लाग्छ ।

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Political Economy of a Crisis

Nepal in Crisis: Growth and Stagnation at the Periphery (henceforth Crisis) by Piers Blakie, John Cameron and David Seddon is an ambitious work. A skill to draw up and work out on a vast canvas, a nose for the significant and the immense, and a not-inconsiderable theoretical sophistication clearly mark out Crisis as one of the most important books on Nepal published during the last three decades.

The basic objective of Crisis is two-fold. The first objective is to draw up an historically-informed model of Nepal's political economy in so far as it relates to Nepal's underdeveloped productive basis at the 'national' level. The first section of the book is devoted to this end. The second objective of Crisis is to provide an intensive understanding of the Western Development Region as a case study of underdevelopment at the 'periphery.' This case study of the Western Development Region forms the subject matter of the remaining two sections of the book.

Crisis opens with a general enunciation of the problems facing Nepal today. As the authors formulate it,

Nepal in the mid-1970s is not just a very poor country that appears to be increasingly unable to provide adequately for its now rapidly growing population--that would be a misleading oversimplification, and in some respects an understatement, of the problems that exist. The country is now in a period of crisis, whose major components, over the next decade, will include serious over-population relative to employment opportunities, ecological collapse in the densely populated and highly vulnerable hill areas ... and the elimination of certain important 'natural' resources ... both in the

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hills and in the plains. These will be associated with an increasing inability to pay for imported commodities with growing food shortages, and consequently with the development of widespread unrest in both rural and urban areas, which together will threaten the viability of the prevailing political system and even Nepal's position as an independent state (pp. 13-4).

As the authors elaborate it elsewhere, the overwhelming reliance on agriculture, especially 'peasant agriculture', and a generally degenerating industrial capability are the other major elements of the crisis. Of course, as the authors note in course of their study of the Western Development Region, there have been certain 'growth sectors' in Nepali economic life as manifested in the growth of towns and transportation networks and in the massive expansion of the bureaucracy. These 'growth,' however, are 'spurious' and 'fail to alter the fundamental characteristics of underdevelopment, mask them and, in some cases, even strengthen them' (pp. 7-8). Essentially, since the equation of growth with development is not valid (p. 101), these apparent growths cannot be taken to have laid the groundwork for 'development.'

This crisis of Nepal's present, the authors argue, is 'fundamentally rooted in a failure of the productive organization associated with its economic and political underdevelopment' (p. 5) which is itself attributable to certain historically coexisting ('from the late eighteenth century onwards;' p. 24) 'constraints' on Nepal's political economy. The essentially 'non-progressive' (p. 45) quality of Nepal's political and administrative structure constitutes the second constraint. The third constraint is related to transnational and intra-national dependency relationships between the 'centre' and the 'periphery.' At the transnational level, the authors note, this dependency relationship is manifested in the 'semi-colonial experience' (p. 5) of Nepal vis-a-vis the British, and later, independent India. At the intra-national level this constraint is manifested in the existence of dominance-and-dependency relationships between Kathmandu on the one hand and the outlying areas of Nepal on the other. These coexisting and simultaneously-operating constraints, since they lie at the root of the archaic political economy of Nepal, have 'tragically constrained the possibilities of development (of Nepal)' (p. 24).

There can be little doubt that the basic conceptual framework of Crisis--and the arguments presented therein--bear considerable validity. The utilization political-economic categories to understand the present crisis of Nepal is refreshing, given the overwhelming 'tendency' among Nepalese as well as international researchers to explain the crisis at the idealistic, and the ideo-

logical, level. It is to the credit to the authors of Crisis that they cast a bold and 'new' conceptual framework to understand the very difficult state Nepal finds itself in.

This is not to say, however, that Crisis is not ridden with a number of major theoretical-factual gaps and oversimplifications. To begin with, the authors of Crisis, despite their historical orientation, visualize modern Nepalese history statically. The last two hundred years of Nepal's history is just about frozen into a synchronic frame. (The early Nepalese history is even more summarily treated; p. 25-6). The assertion that 'there is a crucial continuity in the nature of Nepalese economy and the Nepalese State from the late eighteenth century onwards,' (p. 24) is imbued with a potential for oversimplification and thus of distortion. Unfortunately, Crisis bears its share of this weakness. This freeze-the-time outlook--which is clearly manifested in the breathless and occasionally overgeneralizing style of the first section of Crisis--leads to a distorted understanding of the crisis by freeing the authors from the responsibility of providing a dialectical treatment of the topic at hand. Indeed, given that a crisis is not a 'static point towards which (some) societies move,' (p. 5) it becomes even more obligatory on the part of the investigators to specify the dialectics of structural contradictions and/or their manifestations at each of the major temporal-structural disjunctions in the course of the dynamics of the crisis. Take the case of population growth and ecological deterioration--two of the most important elements of the crisis--for example. (Alternatively, one could also take the example of the opening-up of the tarai and the fantastic migratory patterns of the recent years, both of which are of no mean political-economic significance). We know that the rate of growth of both population and ecological deterioration became much more acute beginning in the 1950s. That is, there was a major disjunction in the dynamics of population and ecology beginning in the 1950s compared to that in the previous one hundred years. How does one explain this 'sudden' acute dynamics of certain major elements of the crisis? How does a 'chronic' crisis (p. 5) become acute? Or, how and under what condition does a movement toward a crisis become 'inexorable' (p. 14)? Clearly, a particular configuration of political-economic conceptual categories, although fairly sufficient to account for a crisis at a given point in time, is not necessarily fairly sufficient to account for the crisis at another point in time.

Crisis, despite its theoretical sophistication, has not been altogether successful in utilizing its conceptual framework to the full. Take the case of 'overpopulation' again. It would have been highly creditable on the part of the authors of Crisis had they been able to consider population and population growth as an intrinsic aspect of political economy. Clearly, a framework which can provide a meaningful understanding of the organization of pro-

duction in everyday life also has to be able to provide a meaningful understanding of reproduction in everyday life, including the reproduction of human beings. The mode of utilization of the political-economic framework in Crisis divests itself from the realization of this potentiality. Parameters of population, instead, are invariably hypostatized. The result is a weaker, and considerably distorted, reading of the dialectics of the crisis.

The implied, and yet adamant, commitment of Crisis to the capitalistic mode of development is another of its drawbacks. The authors of Crisis do not even provide a working definition of 'development' (or of 'underdevelopment' for that matter), but it is clear from their utilization of certain terminologies, e.g. 'accumulation,' 'number of labourers employed,' that they envision a flowering of capitalistic development in Nepal should it overcome the crisis. Indeed, and paradoxically (given that only a miniscule proportion of the population is enmeshed within the capitalistic relations of production; pp. 46-74), the authors appear to argue that the adoption of capitalistic praxis might be the only way out of the crisis. One wonders of this argument is based on the principle of the historical inevitability of the systematic succession of the different modes of organization of production. Or, is the miniscule capitalism in existence in Nepal an evidence of the structural principles and the real tendencies (cf. Lukacs, 1971: 155) of a full-blown capitalism of the future? It is apparent that Crisis would have done much better had it examined the potential compatibilities of Nepal's political-economic contours in relation to the various other alternative forms of 'development.'

Crisis is also an uneven and internally-split work. The second and the third sections, which focus exclusively on the Western Development Region, are indeed well-documented at the empirical level. However, their theoretical fit with the first section is weak and tenuous. The overall theoretical model outlined in the first section fails to find an explicit and concrete expression in the study of the Western Development Region. A painstaking documentation is no substitute for precision and specification, which is what one would have expected in following the lines adopted in Section One. Even the authors' self-conscious use of three prefaces to go with the three sections of the book--which was basically meant to pull Sections Two and Three closer to Section One--has not been altogether effective in binding the three sections together into a thematic whole. In addition, the last two sections also witness the authors engage in ad hoc and simplistic theorizing in contradistinction to the abstract and parsimonious utilization of the theoretical framework in the first section. How else is one to understand the authors' assertion that 'special circumstances of demand or the ability to adapt techniques or utilize technology' has enabled some industries in

the Western Development Region to slow down their decline (p. 188)? One equally wonders at the political-economic implication embedded in the assertion that growth in the size of given hotels and catering houses in certain towns in the Western Development Region 'depends largely on the personality of the proprietor' (p. 197).

Certain 'facts', and inferences drawn from such 'facts', in Crisis are also open to question. Crisis, for example, notes that 'the vast bulk of production in agriculture is undertaken by peasant producers' (i.e., peasants who till their own land; p. 47), basing itself on the statistics collected by Zaman (1973). It is noted that only 'about 20 percent of the peasants (are) involved in sharecropping or renting some or all of their land from a larger landowner' (p. 47). The figure for the proportion of tenants in Zaman (1973), as well as Crisis, appears disquietingly low given that 60 percent of the cultivated land, around 1950, was 'tenanted by farmers paying rent to various categories of intermediary owners' (Zaman, 1973: 8). The proportion of tenanted land could not, in all likelihood, have decreased very much by 1973. One is left to surmise on whether 60 percent of total cultivated land could have been operated on by only 20 percent of the producers. Given this apparent disparity, one is compelled to suspect that Zaman's 'tenants' include only those who are officially certified as such. Thus, Crisis, given as it is to the empiricistic definition of tenancy, appears to exclude a substantial proportion of direct (tenant) producers from the rank of tenants. It is little wonder that it has to deal with an artificially swelled rank of 'independent peasantry.' This unwarranted emphasis (see especially pp. 47-53) assumes a grotesque note when confronted with the fact that 83 percent of the total number of households in Nepal control only 28 percent of the total land and that another 28 percent of the total land is controlled by mere two percent of the total number of households (cf. Zaman, 1973: 88). It is regrettable that the authors of Crisis fail to incorporate this particular aspect of Nepal's agrarian structure into their theoretical framework.

The outline of pre-modern history drawn in Crisis also rests on shaky grounds. Pastoralism as a productive type was probably pushed to the background well before the nineteenth century (cf. p. 30) in many of the hill areas. Records indicate that pastoral taxes were neither a characteristic nor a prominent feature of the fourteenth century Khas political economy (cf. Pokharel, 1971: 9, 15, 24). The assertion that maize was introduced during the nineteenth century (p. 30) also appears to be incorrect. The introduction of maize in Nepal dates back to 1330 A.D. (cf. Gopālraj-vamshāvalī: 46A). (It is possible, of course, that maize as a major staple in the hill areas is a relatively recent phenomenon). The implication that sedentary settlement as well as terracing is relatively new to Nepal (p. 214) does not sound credible. The highly organized economic and military activities of the Khasas

clearly hint at a fairly developed agrarian sedentary culture. Records also indicate that the Khas agrarian culture also included terrace-farming (cf. Pokharel, 1971: 13-4).

These shortcomings notwithstanding, Crisis is an excellent work. It successfully breaks new grounds towards unravelling the predicament of present-day Nepal. It is to be hoped that Crisis will stimulate its readers to cast a critical look into the structure of the crisis.

References

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